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No. 193.

IN ARMOR.

BY LETTIE A. IRONS.

Over the pathway my feet walk in
There hovers a Presence rare;
By day or night, be it dark or bright,
It is ever and always there—
Forever and always there.

Through a darkness vale, o'er rugged stones,
My narrow life-path lies;
But on either hand, as I journey on,
I can see fair mountains rise,
O'erhung with smiling skies.

But if, worn out with my weary walk
Along the rugged way,
I would turn where the mountains fair and grand
In the smiling sunshine lay,
The Presence bars my way.

If I would part from my burning lips
A cup of life's bitter pain,
The Presence hovers at my side
And offers it me again—
"Reward shall follow pain."

If Love draw near, and tempt my soul
Razer to claim its mate,
The shadowy Presence draweth near,
And softly whispers, "Wait—
Yet awhile longer, wait."

If, tired of the never-won battle,
I would lay down my faithful sword,
And weary of struggle my fainting soul
Cries, "How much longer, Lord!"

The Presence stands beside me,
And says to my soul, "Be strong
Yet awhile longer; resume thy sword,
And battle with giant wrong—
After victory, song!"

And so I wait, with what patience I may,
Knowing God rules in all,
And that at length, in His own good time,
He will make my chains to fall,
And free me from every thrall.

Knowing at last the pain will cease—
The battle at last be won;
At last the weary march be o'er—
The painful struggle done—
The thirsome race be run.

Knowing at last I shall hear the words,
"Well done," and my sword lay down,
Leave the darkness vale for the mountains fair,
And the cross exchange for a crown.

NADIA, THE RUSSIAN SPY; OR, The Brothers of the Starry Cross.

BY CAPT. FREDERICK WHITTAKER,
AUTHOR OF "THE RED RAJAH," "THE SEA CAT," "THE
HOOK RIDER," "DOUBLE-DEATH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV. PRINCE GALLITZIN.

IN Russia there are two great parties in politics, two in religion. Old Russia and Young Russia hate each other in politics; the Orthodox Church and the Old Believers anathematize each other in religion. Now Young Russia is Free Russia, tolerant in religion, headed by the czar. Twenty years ago Old Russia was in power, persecuting Old Believers, and Nicholas was the head of the Orthodox Church.

Within the empire, superior in numbers, but deprived of power, stood the Young Russian party, and its recognized chief was Prince Alexis Gallitzin.

Prince Gallitzin, a tall, stately gentleman, with gray hair, and drooping gray mustache, dressed in the universal military uniform, stood in his drawing-room, looking absently from the window at the streams of sleds flying down the great ice-mountain erected on the frozen Neva, near his palace.

Several ladies and gentlemen were in the room, chatting on the usual nothings of fashionable society; and at last one of them mentioned the subject of the war, just declared by the allies against Russia.

The Princess Gallitzin, a tall, queenly-looking lady, with dark hair and black eyes of unusual splendor, immediately said:

"There can be no doubt that his imperial majesty will sweep the insolent Franks and Moslems alike into the sea. We are all as one in the belief that Russia must conquer."

Prince Gallitzin turned from the window with his hands behind his back, and observed: "It is always unwise, Sergia, to boast of a battle before it is fought. We shall meet no unworthy adversaries in these French. Remember, I was a boy at Borodino."

Several other gentlemen ventured to express a timid doubt as to whether it would be easy to beat the allies, when the princess interrupted in a sneering tone:

"What, are you all against Russia? 'Tis lucky Gorloff is not here."

Then Prince Gallitzin, in a peculiar voice, said:

"Who knows that he is not here now, by his spy, Sergia? For my part I would not give myself the trouble to turn aside to step on vermin like Gorloff and his crew of so-called nobles, creatures of one man."

Princess Sergia smiled placidly.

"You forget that that man is the czar."

"I forget nothing," said Gallitzin, carelessly; "not even whom I have raised to rank here this. Good-morning, madam. Come, Dolgoroucki, the sledge waits."

And the two old princes, heads of the noblest houses in Russia, left the saloon together, and descended the broad marble stairs. The princess turned ghastly pale at some hidden meaning in her husband's words, and bit her lip till the blood came, while her eyes flashed a momentary glance after his receding form that few men would have liked to encounter.

But the next instant she was all smiles and pleasantness, as she conversed with Colonel Count Ruloff, one of the old nobles of Russia, who alone frequented the Gallitzin palace.

The cause of her secret rage and the prince's sneer was well known to all there, although none noticed it ostensibly. Prince Gallitzin, twenty years before, had married the beautiful Sergia Newsky, the star prima donna of the Imperial Opera House, for her beauty and her voice. He had found, too late, that he had married a devil in passion, and their life had



"How I should like to try one shot at the Christian dogs yonder! I could take off their leader so easily. Shall I do it?"

been embittered by constant quarrels ever since. The princess was a Gypsy. In that word lay the explanation of all. The wild Gypsy blood was not tamed in her, and the Princess Gallitzin was true to her old tribe, in deceit, vindictiveness and boundless extravagance.

When her husband refused at last to sanction the perpetual demands on his purse, which might have crippled the czar himself then it was that Sergia listened to the persuasive voice of Gorloff, and became a police spy on her own husband.

And Gallitzin knew it, and disdained to notice it, save by a sarcasm such as now sent the tigress-blood to Sergia's heart.

"Let it go, Boris," he said to his brother prince, as the latter made some remark to him about caution when they were driving away.

"I know that every word I say goes to Gorloff, and thence to Romanoff. But what care I? Let them send me to Siberia, if they dare. The Gallitzins led Russian armies against Jerchis Khan, six hundred years ago, when the Romanoffs were German counts. If they drive me to the wall, they'll find no Polish Jew about me. I will light such a flame—"

"Hush!" said Dolgoroucki, cautiously; "you forget you are in the streets, with spies on the box, perhaps. After all, neither you nor I would do harm to Russia, and she has chosen the Romanoffs for her czars."

"Understand me," said the old prince, haughtily; "I recognize Nicholas Romanoff as my czar, and so long as he respects the old houses that made his, so long I obey him. But I speak my mind where I will, and let him or Gorloff stop me if they dare. Nay, Boris, don't look so grave. There are no spies among my serfs. I'll trust them all as I would—"

And here he suddenly broke off abruptly.

They were passing the winter palace, and two magnificent equipages stood before the grand entrance, which both nobles instantly recognized. One was the gorgeous sleigh of the minister of police, and the other bore on the side panels the imperial arms.

"The Grand Duke Alexander has come back," was the remark of the polite Dolgoroucki.

"The best of the breed is home at last. Now we shall be safe from that low-bred hound Gorloff, and his spies," said fiery Gallitzin, as he passed close to the minister's sledge, and looked full in the face of an aide-de-camp who was awaiting his chief on the back seat. He spoke loudly to be heard.

The young officer flushed deeply, and tugged nervously at his yellow mustache, but he did not dare say anything, and the sleigh of the two most powerful nobles in Russia went jingling down the street. Then cautious Dolgoroucki observed:

"What ails you, Alexis, that you must ever be making enemies? You insulted that man and his chief without need or reason."

"Quite the reverse, my friend," said Gallitzin, calmly. "That man who sat there so quietly is Gorloff's head spy in the palace, and will tell his master just what I say. It will

make Gorloff furious, for, as you know, he hates to be reminded of his low origin. Well, an angry man is no match for a cool one, and I am cool. I'll beat that Gorloff before many years are out, and you shall see his name among the men condemned to the knout. He and I have an old score to settle, and I'll pay it up with interest."

"An old account to settle? How so?" asked Prince Boris.

Gallitzin laughed, bitterly.

"You don't know, Boris. How should you, innocent old fellow? You spend the autumn hunting bears on your estates, and the summer at the roulette tables of Baden. You never hear of those who disappear, and are returned as dead by the police. Let it pass. I am sorry we saw that dog's sleigh. Let us go to the country again, Boris, before the snow melts and the roads disappear. I am sick of this place since Nadia left us."

Something in the theme seemed to sadden the old prince, for he turned aside his head, and dashed his gloved hand across his eyes, as if the keen wind made them water.

"Never mind, old friend," said Gallitzin, more cheerfully. "We hoped great things once from this marriage, but it was not to be. God and the czar would not permit it. How is Ivan?"

"He was in command of his regiment in the Caucasus, well and happy, when I heard from him last," said Dolgoroucki, quietly.

"Happy?" repeated Gallitzin, with an indescribable intonation; "and yet, God help us all, Nadia is not two years gone."

Dolgoroucki turned and looked at the other gravely, as he said:

"Gallitzin, my nephew, Ivan Cyprianoff, is not a man to forget so easily. He loves me, and does not wish to make me gloomy by telling of his own sorrows. But you will never see him wed mortal woman, till Nadia rises from her grave to bid him do it. A Russian noble never breaks his word."

CHAPTER V. THE SERF'S DEVOTION.

AWAY once more to the cradle of humanity, the heart of the east, the green steppes of Turkestan, now covered with the flowers of early spring, and sloping down by the precipices at the edge of Ust Urt to the tossing waves of the Caspian sea.

A great speckled bustard rose up from the grass, and ran forward with outspread wings, cackling out his joy to the returning sun. A covey of partridges and heavy ruffed Tartar grouse flapped over the green meadows with a loud whirr, calling to each other, and frightening the hare from her form, the antelope from her covert among the tall grass stems, as the glorious sun rose up out of the level steppe.

Yonder came a Kirghis chief with a party of warriors, hawk on wrist, galloping over the greensward on their swift Turcoman steeds; and heigh! what a whirling of wings and shouting of horsemen as the swift goshawks

are cast off and go dashing in among the birds! The great bustard sees his dreaded enemies coming, and rises in the air with beating pinions, towering perpendicularly aloft where the skimming goshawk can not follow!

He thinks he is safe there, for he has recognized his foes busy at the smaller low-flying game, and knows the goshawk can not tower like himself.

But he reckons without his host, as the Tartar chief screams, excitedly, to his falconers: "Ali, Hafiz, up with the byres quickly! See yonder, a bustard of fifty pounds! Up, I say!"

And then comes a flapping and screaming as the falconers, in great haste, unhood and loosen two magnificent falcons, birds whose frowning black brows and pointed wings proclaim them to be the noble high-flying peregrine falcons, dear to medieval romance, and still well known to the Tartar of the steppes.

Away go Jewel Eyes and Sultan, the chief's favorite falcons, rising in spiral circles higher and higher, and towering even above the powerful bustard, till Sultan pauses an instant above him, and then drops like a stone upon his enemy.

The bustard writhes over on his back in the air, presenting claw and beak in defense, a bird three times the size of the falcon; but Jewel Eyes has attained the summit of her flight, and comes dashing swiftly to her comrade's assistance. Down come the falcons on their quarry, with a clash of wings and grasping of talons; and then all three fall to the earth, entangled together, while the Tartars gallop up, shouting and swinging their lures, eager for the well-earned prey.

Just as the chief was leaping from his horse to secure his birds, a cry from one of his attendants caused him to look up.

"A boat, a boat from the Muscovite dogs! Look yonder!" yells Ali, the head falconer, pointing northward.

The chief looked. The perpendicular rocks that surround the dry plateau of Ust Urt jutted out into the sea not far off, and round the point came the sail of a large boat driving across the fresh east wind, over the sparkling waves.

"God is great and Mohammed is his prophet," said the chief, in his sententious Mussulman fashion. "The infidel dogs have the sea and the guns, the true believers have the steppe here and Paradise hereafter. Let the dogs go. They have their great guns there, and yonder is a guard-boat."

At this moment a second falconer galloped in, crying:

"Mount and ride, great chief! See yonder, prey for us!"

The chief looked in the direction indicated, and saw two mounted figures galloping for dear life across the steppe toward the sea, between him and the precipice of Ust Urt.

In a moment he was in his saddle, and had caught up the broad ax that hung in front, the chief weapon of the Tartar.

"Infidel dogs escaping!" he shouted. "Cut them off and take them alive. They are worth ten camels."

Away went twenty Kirghis warriors at head-long speed over the steppe, standing up in their short stirrups, and bending over their horses' necks, every man grasping his battle-ax nervously.

The people before them were evidently fugitives; for, as they came nearer, it could be seen that both wore the Russian dress, and one was a woman. Muscovites outside the lines meet scant mercy from the Moslem Kirghis.

The two fugitives were crossing the path of the Tartars, and rushing for the coast. It soon became plain that they would be intercepted. Their horses were poor and thin, as if from long travel, both were ridden barebacked, and the Tartars rode three feet to their two. Although they were half a mile off when first seen, it was not five minutes before both were within a hundred yards of the coast, just as the guard-boat luffed up and stood in toward the shore.

And then the male fugitive suddenly turned on the Tartars like a tiger, and drew a heavy sabre as he turned. The woman was then several paces in advance, and the man shouted: "Save yourself, dear lady. I can fight fifty of these. Ride into the sea. The boat will save you."

The lady hesitated a moment, and the Tartar chief, disdaining the man, spurred hard for the more valuable prize.

Then, with a startled scream of terror, away went the lady toward the coast; while Demetri the serf, for he it was, met the chief; and ran the point of his sabre through the Tartar's body as he swept past, intent only on the woman.

The next moment poor Demetri was surrounded by uplifted axes, and fighting desperately, but with gigantic strength; while the lady was clear of her pursuers and down by the water's edge.

The Tartars were so intent on vengeance as to forget plunder for the time, and they pressed on the unhappy serf with ferocious yells. But Demetri fought with wonderful skill. Had he been better mounted he might even have escaped. As it was, his jaded beast, cut loose from the abandoned sledge at the end of the snow-line, was unable to answer the sudden call on its energies. Cut down by the blow of an ax, it fell to the earth, and there was the strong serf on the ground, dodging the ax-blows, stabbing horses, fighting like ten men, to engage the Tartars and save his beloved mistress, while the latter was already swimming her horse toward the approaching Russian guard-boat.

Then, all on a sudden, the report of a light piece of artillery was heard, and a white cloud shot from the bow of the boat, followed by the humming, whistling whirr of a shower of grape.

Down went several men and horses under that deadly fire, and the Tartars scattered and fled in dismay, leaving Demetri alone, staggering toward the shore, cut and hacked in a ghastly way, but still alive.

The Tartars left their chief and four warriors dead, while three more men hobbled off on foot, wounded; for Demetri's sabre and that volley of grape had done fearful execution.

The serf, staggering to the shore, saw a small boat in the act of leaving the guard-boat, and just as it reached the figure of his mistress he sunk down on the beach, the blood dripping from his wounds on the white sand.

"Thank God! the gracious lady is safe," muttered Demetri; "and if I die for it, 'twill be only my duty."

And then the poor fellow swooned away from loss of blood, and knew no more. The bright sun shone, the breeze rustled the grass, the free steppe seemed to answer the laughing sea with the joy of existence, and there lay the dying serf, who had saved his lady's life at the expense of his own, alone on the Caspian shore.

But Demetri was not to die thus. Strong arms raised him, and stolid official faces were over him.

One said, in a dry, matter-of-course tone:

"Two prisoners, escaping from the mines. They won't try it again this year. Put him in the boat, Vassili. The doctor will attend to him. The captain says we've earned a reward for these two."

And when Demetri came to his senses, he found himself in a close, stuffy cabin, while his beloved mistress hung over him, weeping, and saying:

"Alas, Demetri, we have done all in vain. We are prisoners again."

CHAPTER VI. CAZAR AND CAZAREVITCH.

At the moment when the servant announced the arrival of the Grand Duke Alexander, General Gorloff bowed deeply before the czar, and said in a low tone:

"His Imperial Highness can unravel the mystery, sire, I doubt not. Try him."

Then he retired softly behind the emperor's chair, and the next instant the czarevitch, tall and handsome, with his father's face and form, but with the singular kindness and gentleness of his uncle expressed in his countenance, entered the room.

The Grand Duke Alexander, at thirty-five, was as much under his father's thumb as a boy of fourteen. His uniform of a colonel of Cossacks of the Guard, with the heron plume in the cap only allowed to be worn by the *khetman*, showed his position. It was nothing higher than that of a staff officer of the emperor, with plenty of work and little pleasure.

The Grand Duke entered, ungreeted by either czar or minister.

Since they last parted, Alexander had been on a trip of ten thousand miles, around the utmost confines of Siberia and back, to visit the posts of the Russian army as an inspecting officer for his father.

Now, as humbly as a private orderly, he doffed his fur cap, advanced before the emperor's chair, and said:

"Your majesty's orders have been obeyed, sire."

The czar looked at his son as coldly as if he had been a stone.

"Well, sir, so you have visited all the frontier. Have you any special report to make?" "My report is here, sire, embodying all the posts." And the Grand Duke pulled a bundle of papers from his belt, which he handed to the emperor. Nicholas threw them on the table and gazed upon his son, in the stern, freezing manner of which he was so proud, and which generally struck awe into every one.

"You have performed your duty quickly, sir. I hope it has been done well. Who is Captain Blank?"

As the czar spoke the last words, he looked at the young heir to the empire keenly and scrutinizingly. Alexander met his gaze as calmly as if the question was a commonplace one. He did not express any surprise, he only said:

"I do not know, sire."

At this juncture Gorloff coughed—very delicately, it is true, but still in a manner expressive of disbelief. The Grand Duke raised his eyes to those of the minister with a certain look in them like his father's, and the General dropped his gaze modestly, while a faint smile played around his mustache.

The emperor turned his head quickly from one to the other, his eyes showing a great deal of the white, and then observed, in a deep, grating tone:

"Have you two gentlemen a secret between you that I can not share? General Gorloff, you asked me to question the czarévitch about this Captain Blank, who lets prisoners escape. I have done so. He says he knows nothing of this fellow. What think you?"

"I do not venture to think," began Gorloff, in his most persuasive tones, "that his Imperial Highness knows who is Captain Blank, but I would respectfully submit that he may be able to tell something about the way in which the duplicate authority came into the hands of the anonymous scoundrel known as Captain Blank."

"Do you know any thing of this captain, sir?" asked the czar, harshly. "If you do, tell us all at once."

"I know this, sire," said the prince, stiffly: "that several times, when I visited a post, this Captain Blank had visited it before me, and by means of an order which he produced had secured all the advantages which I hoped to have been alone in enjoying. Who and what he is no one knew, save that he bore a marvellous resemblance to a prisoner. He was the cause of the escape of a prisoner named Anna Bronk, whom, with a self named Demetri, he met near the border, and allowed to escape into Turkistan. General Grodinsky told me this, but we could make no guess at the person. It is for the Minister of Police to do that, sire, is it not?"

Czar Nicholas smiled grimly. "That is for myself to judge. As for you, I suppose you're longing to behold the faces of your family. Is it not so?"

"It certainly is, sire," said the Grand Duke, quietly.

He had been away from home for a year already, and had not dared to visit his family before reporting to his father and czar.

Then the emperor smiled his own pleasant smile, with his brows knit and his eyes very wide open.

"I think that you have done your work very well, sir; so well that I must employ you forthwith on fresh duty. You will be ready to start for the Crimea to-morrow night. Twelve hours is enough for a soldier to enjoy his home, and Russia is a camp among enemies. You have heard, I suppose, that the nephew of the Corsican upstart when my brother Alexander conquered had declared war against us, with the help of the Infidels and the English."

"I have heard it, sire," said the Grand Duke, simply.

"Their forces are getting ready to descend on Sevastopol," said the czar. "To-morrow night you must be on the road. Visit the fortifications, consult with Colonel Todleben of the Engineers, and return hither in six weeks with a complete report. You fully understand?"

"I do, sire," said Alexander, somewhat stiffly.

"Then here are your orders. Now go home." And the czar handed him a folded parchment, turned his back on his son and addressed Gorloff.

"General, remember we have not found out this Captain Blank. See to it that he does not play any more tricks on my son, on this trip. I hold you responsible for this good natured imbecile."

The Minister of Police shot a peculiar glance at his master.

"I understand your majesty. This time I defy Captain Blank."

The czarévitch was still waiting, cap in hand.

"What do you wait for, sir?" demanded the emperor, sharply.

"Has your majesty any further commands?" asked Alexander.

"None, do it," said his polite father, with a sneer.

"Then I wish your majesty a respectful adieu."

And the Grand Duke backed from the room and disappeared.

Nicholas turned to his minister with a laugh, for even he was sometimes jocular, after the manner of a playful tiger.

"Gorloff," he said, "with all your Slavonian craft, you are no match for our Germans. That fellow has fooled you. He knows who Captain Blank is, and he won't tell. By St. Nicholas, sir, I feel proud of him, for all he is soft-hearted fool, like the late czar. I know him better than you do. He'll dupe you and laugh at your spies, and Captain Blank will appear again. After all, you're not fit for a Minister of Police, Gorloff. I shall have to send for Gallitzin. He fools you, also."

And the czar rose and stalked to the window, with a great clatter of spur and saber. Gorloff, for the first time in the interview, flushed scarlet. The czar had pierced his professional vanity in the tenderest spot. He did hate and fear the two men named beyond every one in Russia.

The emperor stood at the window and beheld the Grand Duke enter his sleigh and drive away. Just as the horses started, the equipage of Prince Gallitzin came dashing back down the avenue and passed by. As the equipages met, Prince Gallitzin rose to his feet and saluted the czarévitch with a profound bow, a courtesy returned by the other with equal ceremony. Prince Dolgoroucki, on the other side of Gallitzin, merely touched his cap in military fashion. Then the czar laughed sneeringly, and as he did so Gallitzin looked up and saw him. The old prince stiffly replaced his cap, sat down with folded arms and was whirled away.

General Gorloff, trying to swallow his master's sarcasms, was growing calm, when the czar turned to him, with pale face and glittering eyes, saying, in a hissing whisper:

"The reigning family of Russia has made so many German marriages, since Peter's time, as to be at least nineteen-twentieths German."

"Gorloff, I gave you a task. Here's one more. Watch that insolent dog Gallitzin for a traitor. He has publicly saluted the czarévitch, and refused to salute the czar. Find him guilty of treason, and the day you bring the proofs you shall be a prince. Now go. Watch them all, day and night."

The minister of the police left the palace, trembling with joy.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CIRCASSIANS.

The western shore of the Caspian Sea towered abruptly to the skies from the edge of the water, and peak surmounted peak in the Caucasian range, up to the eternal snows of Mount Elborz, a hundred miles away, and yet visible beside his brother Kasbek. In a little sheltered bay lay the Russian post of Baku, guarded by palisades and a strong garrison; and toward Baku the Russian guard-boat, which had captured the two fugitives on the further shore, was standing, before a gentle evening breeze, the red glow of the setting sun falling on her white sails.

Baku was the only post for twenty miles, and the mountains between it and the next were still roamed freely by Schamy's warriors.

On the evening when the guard-boat returned, sharp eyes were watching post and vessel alike, from the heights above the hamlet, and although the mountain was to all appearance still and quiet, several hundred men were concealed in the dark ravines, and horses were stanching under the trees nibbling their forage, all saddled and equipped for war.

On the summit of a rock, staring keenly down at the distant boat, stood a stern, handsome fellow of singular grace of figure, whose picturesque costume reminded one of a Crusader, had not the long, curiously ornamented gun he carried dispelled the illusion. He was a Circassian warrior, of that glorious type which has given the name Caucasian to a whole race; and he was a noble specimen of his mail-clad countrymen.

A second man, in sheep-skin cap and capote, lay on the ground beside him, peering over the edge of the precipice at a party of Cossacks riding through the pass below to Baku.

"Staffer Allah! (God is mighty) Hafiz," said the man on the ground to the standing one; "how I should like to try one shot at the Christian dogs yonder! I could take off their leader so easily. Shall I do it?"

The outpost frowned. "Not for your life, fool. The prophet does not war on single men. Such a shot would warn them who is here, that they might keep double watch to-night. Let them pass. To-night they will be drunk, and keep slack ward. Yonder boat's coming back means something of joy to the infidel dogs. They are always drunk then."

"It's a hard thing to let them go without one shot," said the recumbent one, regretfully, as the party of Cossacks filed around a rock out of sight; "but I suppose we shall make amends to-night."

"Ay, ay," said Hafiz, earnestly; "to-night this blade shall drink deep of Muscovite blood, and the prophet Schamy'll shall come to his own. See the boat, Ali; she is coasting along as if she were going to land some one outside the port. By the mercy of Allah, she is!"

He placed his fingers to his lips and blew a short, shrill whistle. It was answered instantly from the rear, and a man came stealing out of the ravine to his side.

"Sergeant Pushkin, bring up the prisoners from below. The woman Bronk is to be sent to Tiflis to the Governor. The man will have to be sent to the hospital till he gets well."

Captain Ivanoff was a wooden Russian martinet, who did his duty without reference to captives' feelings. He had obeyed his orders to cruise up and down the east coast of the Caspian Sea, looking after escaped prisoners, and he had found two, whose names had been sent him from Port Perofsky, as Anna Bronk and Demetri Solitoff. The orders had been to send both, if able to travel, straight to Tiflis, without stopping at Baku. There was a post-house with horses about half a mile below the turn, and thither the guard-boat steered, while the captain ordered up the prisoners.

Demetri, brought up on a stretcher, was obviously unfit to travel, indeed there was grave question of his living a week. The girl known as Anna Bronk was quiet, pale, but haughty and defiant. Captain Ivanoff addressed her brutally.

"Now, woman, you will soon reap the punishment of your crimes. I am going to send you to Tiflis with Sergeant Pushkin, and on arrival there you will be knouted and sent back to Tobolsk. How do you like that prospect?"

Anna Bronk faced him with a strange light in her mysterious eyes.

"I will remember your words, Captain Ivanoff, when I see you running, the tanks, like a serpent as you are. Lead on with your men, and do not dare to speak to a—"

"To a what?" asked Ivanoff, sneeringly; "are you countess, or duchess, or princess, that an officer may not address you? Never mind. I have seen the knout tame as haughty spirits as yours."

As he spoke, he signed angrily to Pushkin to take her away, for the boat at that moment touched the little pier that marked the first station for political prisoners on the road to Tiflis.

A rude carriage, hung on long, springy poles, between wheels twelve feet apart, and known as a *tarantass*, was already in waiting, with four mounted Cossacks by the horses' heads.

The first sight of the distant guard-boat had brought it out.

The girl was not even allowed to take leave of Demetri, but hurried off by grim Sergeant Pushkin, who received from his chief the necessary papers. Then *erak* went the whip, and the three horses started at a gallop, the Cossacks riding, still alongside, with their rigid military seat, bumping like sacks.

They had not over two hundred yards to go before the road entered the dark defile of a mountain pass, and then they disappeared from view.

The girl thus forcibly conveyed away sat gloomily on a bundle of hay in the back part of the *tarantass* (there were no seats) and seemed to be buried in painful reflections.

After all the efforts and dangers of her escape she had been taken once more, and now was going back to a slavery that she well knew to be more arduous than ever. She seemed to be conscious of little, as the light faded out from the sky, and the pass became buried in deep darkness, compelling the Cossacks and their escort to bring their pace down to a walk. She sat still brooding.

Then, suddenly, as they were in the midst of a wood, there came a loud shout from the roadside, followed by the spitting red flashes of twenty muskets, and Sergeant Pushkin, with three Cossacks, fell dead or dying, while the *tarantass* horses snorted and reared in terror. The last Cossack wheeled round and fled to Baku, while the girl found herself seized and hustled out of the carriage by the fierce mountaineers of the Caucasus.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 102.)

A DAY-DREAM.

BY HAP HAZARD.

My temples are fanned by the breeze cool,
With the new-mown hay scent-laden,
As I lie at length near the rippling brook,
Whose music pervades the sequestered nook,
And dream sweet dream of Alderun.

I lie and dream of days long gone,
When my soul in a first love revelled;
And my thoughts go back to a maiden fair,
With a crowning glory of golden hair,
On a neck of snow-dew bejeweled.

Oh, what so bright as her sparkling eyes!
Like light on the waters glancing,
Was the light in her blue-veined lid,
Which now revealed, and now hid,
The mercurial in them dancing.

And what so soft as her velvet cheek,
With the tint of the blush-rose glowing;
And her voice, as sweet as a silver bell,
In varying cadence rose and fell,
Like liquid music flowing.

And what so pure as her bosom fair,
With its virgin charms soft swelling,
Where only thoughts of the holiest,
Such as might spring in the purest breast
Of an angel, found a dwelling.

And what so light as her bounding step,
As she pressed, for a moment fleeting,
And b-b-b, as the wind, the grass of the mead,
As it had but nodded in greeting,
As it had but nodded in greeting.

The lissome reed, the oriole's note,
The star, the blue-rose and lily,
As symbols of her beauty,
Of the matchless charms of my lady fair,
Must serve, though they do it but illy.

The Man from Texas:

OR, THE OUTLAWS OF ARKANSAS.

A STORY OF THE ARKANSAS BORDER.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "MAD DETECTIVE," "BOBBY MOUNTAIN BOB,"
"WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED
MAZEPA," "ACE OF SPADES," "HEART OF
FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

TILDA FORSYTH.

MATILDA FORSYTH, or Tilda, as she was more generally termed, was not what might be called a handsome girl. She was tall in stature, lean in flesh, with coarse brown hair, green-gray eyes, and a sallow complexion.

Not a very striking picture did she present, as she stood in the center of the road, a hundred feet or so from the log-cabin—her home—with the last rays of the afternoon sun shining down upon her uncovered head, arrayed in a faded calico gown, and anxiously looking up and down in search of the one solitary cow that the Forsyth family owned.

But "Brindle" was nowhere to be seen, and did not deign to come to the repeated calls made by the girl in her shrill, harsh voice.

"Brindle—you Brindle, where air you?" Just as she was meditating whether she should go up or down the narrow road, in search of the dilatory source of supply for the evening meal, she heard a crashing noise coming from the "bush" on the right hand of the road, about a hundred yards from her, as if some heavy body was forcing its way through the bramble and undergrowth.

Never doubting for an instant that it was the missing beast, Tilda renewed her enticing cry: "Oh, Brindle! you Brindle!"

Then out into the road came, not the cow, Brindle, but the outlaw, Yell Ozark, armed to the teeth, as usual, and bearing the trusty shotgun in his hand.

The look upon the face of the girl expressed any thing but pleasure at sight of the man, but she did not show any signs of fear; she only set her lips firmly together for a second, then drew a long breath and waited for him to approach.

Ozark came along in his usual slumbering way. He was decidedly more used to the back of a horse than to trust his own legs for locomotion, except when treading the dark and devious paths of the swamp.

"Is you lookin' fur your cow, 'Tilda?" he asked.

"Yes," the girl answered, coldly. "I see'd the beast an hour or so ago down by the cane-brake," he said. "She'll start fur home jes' as soon as the sun's down. I say, 'Tilda, I'll be dog-goned if you ain't lookin' as handsome as a three-year-old colt jes' turned out into the prairie. Feelin' pooty well?"

"Yes," replied the girl sharply, latent hostility in her voice and manner.

"See hyer!" exclaimed the outlaw, after studying the matter over in his mind for a moment. "I reckon that you ain't right glad fur to see me."

"Well, I reckon I ain't," replied the girl, defiantly.

Ozark was a little staggered by this abrupt declaration.

"What's the matter with ye, 'Tilda?" he asked, coaxingly. "What fuss hev you got with me? Look a-hyer, gal, I se allers been a friend of yours."

"Small thanks to you," retorted 'Tilda, disdainfully; "you better take your friendship whar somebody wants it; this chile don't."

The outlaw was extremely perplexed. Shifting the shotgun to the hollow of the left arm, he caressed his chin thoughtfully with his hand.

The girl's temper was evidently roused; a little red spot was burning in either cheek, and an ugly look in her eyes.

"Now, see hyer, 'Tilda: this is rough, this is, gosh back on a friend in this hyer way," said Ozark, appealingly. "What's the fuss? I ain't got any thing agin' you."

"I don't want you to come round ment all!" the girl exclaimed, sharply. "I tole you so the last time I saw you; I want you to keep away an' let me alone."

"'Tilda, I jes' thinks a heap of you," the outlaw replied, impressively. "I think a heap sight more of you, 'Tilda, than I do of any other gal that treads in shoe-leather in this hyer hilt State of Arkansas!"

"Yes, and much good it will do you!" the girl exclaimed, with an expression of scorn upon her face that made even the thick-skinned outlaw wince.

Ozark lost his temper; he ground his teeth together for a moment, and the left hand gripped the lock of the shotgun in a very significant manner.

"See hyer, now; you'll git hurt, the first thing you know, ef you talk so durned sarvy," he cried, threateningly. "I ain't used to havin' people sarce me, an' I don't stand much. You had better keep a civil tongue in your head."

"I shan't for you!" retorted the girl, not in the least alarmed. "I ain't afeard of you ef you hilt State is. Ef you don't like my tongue, you ax me fur to come hyer. An' ef yer come you quit the better. I wouldn't hev nuffin to do with any sich ornery little yaller pup as you air, ef you owned every foot of sile from hyer c'lar to Fort Smith!"

Ozark was thunderstruck; he had never been talked to in this fashion in all his life. If the speaker had been a man, he would have shed his heart's blood there and then, and he felt half-inclined to do so as it was, but with an effort he restrained his angry passion.

"Why, 'Tilda, you're a regular wild-cat!" he said, with a forced laugh; he was trying to treat the affair as a joke. "Your sister, now, was a reg'lar lamb!"

"And you killed her with your cruelty, you durned coward!" the girl exclaimed, fiercely, her anger so intense that she hardly knew what she was saying. "Oh, you needn't finger the lock of your shot-gun; I ain't skeered of ye. It's lucky for you, Yell Ozark, that you didn't git me instead of my sister, fur the first time you laid the weight of a finger on me, I would have waited till you got asleep, an' I'd shot off yer hilt head wid yer own gun!"

Ozark ground his teeth together and made a motion as if to cock the gun, but the girl never flinched.

"I ain't afeard of you!" she repeated; "you don't dar' to kill me. I ain't a nigger, nor a radical ossifer; you tech me, and you have every decent white man in the county arter yer, an' they'll ketch ye an' string ye up like a dog, as you ought to be, you mean, poor white trash!"

This was too much; Ozark felt that he had to leave or else do the girl a mischief, and that was not prudent.

"I've a good mind to smack you right over!" he cried, raising his hand, threateningly, whereupon the girl, never shrinking from the contest, put herself in a position, not only to guard against but to return the blow.

Then it suddenly occurred to Ozark that, unless he used his weapons in an affair of fifty-cuffs, the gaunt, strong-limbed girl, who o'er-topped him three inches at least, would, in all probability be more than a match for him, and that it might end in his getting thrashed by a woman.

With a violent effort the outlaw swallowed his passion, and shaking his fist at the girl, exclaimed:

"I'll git even with you, yit!" and then he plunged into the bush by the road-side from which he had come, 'Tilda in triumph hurling a parting salute of extremely complimentary terms after him.

Then the girl went down toward the cane-brake after the cow, but met Brindle proceeding slowly homeward before she had got half-way.

A little after sundown Pete called in. 'Tilda related to him her encounter with the outlaw, and warned him to look out for himself, for Ozark would probably attempt to shoot him if he discovered his visits to the house.

After supper the lovers—for that was the relation between Pete and 'Tilda—went and sat on a log outside the cabin. Small trace of the wild-cat in the girl, through all that long spring evening, as she confidently leaned her head on her lover's shoulder.

The moon came up bright at ten, and about eleven Pete rose to take his departure. He gave 'Tilda a hearty smack on the lips, bid her good-night, and took three steps in the moon-light toward the road, when—bang! came the report of a shot-gun from the bush, a hundred feet or so from him, and with a terrible moan the German lad went down in the yellow dust—dead, a half a dozen buck-shot in his brain.

CHAPTER XL.

THAT DOUBLE-BARRELED GUN.

The murder of Pete created quite a little ripple of excitement in Smithville and the neighborhood.

The quiet German lad was generally liked, and there was no possible reason why any one should kill him, as he had never quarreled with a single soul since he had come to Smithville, men began to look askance at each other, and muttered that it was about time that this sort of thing was put down.

There was very little doubt as to the man who had lain in wait for Pete, although no one had seen who fired the shot; the manner of the deed and the weapon used sufficiently indicated the outlaw, Yell Ozark.

Probably for the first time since sixty-one, there was an almost universal expression of pleasure as a United States lieutenant and ten boys in blue rode into Smithville, with orders to hunt down the outlaw. As a general rule the presence of the Federal troops provoked a slight feeling of discontent in the interior villages of the South in sixty-eight. It takes time to turn foes into friends.

Some three days after the murder of Pete, a negro came to the lieutenant and informed him that Ozark had taken refuge at the house of a distant relative of his, about two miles beyond the county seat on the East road. This negro's brother had been killed by the outlaw for daring to vote at a town election, and naturally the black thirsted for revenge.

The soldiers and the negro set out. They arrived at the county seat, passed through it—much to the wonder of the inhabitants—and rode down the East road, then, dashing up to the log-cabin, surrounded it in a most masterly manner. But the disgust of the lieutenant in command was intense when he discovered that the outlaw was not in the cabin.

The woman whom the soldiers found in the shanty made no secret of the fact that the outlaw had been there, but said he had gone away on a mule.

Disappointed, the lieutenant resumed his saddle and set out at the head of his men to return to the county seat, as he fully realized that there was little use of hunting after the ruffian, who had, in all probability, received warning of their coming and had sought refuge in the swamp.

The soldiers rode slowly along the road on their homeward way, and the negro beguiled the tediousness of the journey by relating some of the outlaw's desperate and bloody deeds.

And by the time they had ridden a mile or so, the negro had succeeded in convincing the soldiers that the outlaw was a perfect devil, who was as reckless of his life as if he had nine, like a cat, instead of one, and the secret conviction came to nearly all of the troop that it was just as well that Ozark had not been at home when they had made their unceremonious call.

Then the negro happened to turn his head and glance behind him, and a yell of terror came from his lips.

"Oh, Lord! dar he is now!" Bang!

The double-barrel spoke, and a load of buck-shot tore through the arm of the rearward soldier.

Mounted on his gray mule, the outlaw—learning that the troops had been at the cabin after him—had pursued them to give battle.

Bang! went the other barrel.

A horse got it this time, the charge falling short.

The soldiers had just given one glance at the little, sallow man, mounted on the mule, and then had dug their spurs into their horses' flanks and fled in wild confusion without waiting to return a shot.

Twelve men—ten of them regular soldiers—"stampeded" by one!

The soldiers rode into the county seat and took possession of the court-house, intending to use that as a base of operations.

In their flight they had completely run away from the outlaw; but, judge of their surprise, when a negro came in with the intelligence that Ozark had followed them into town, and was

now domiciled at the saloon down the street, enjoying a bottle of whisky and a box of sardines, and waiting for the soldiers to attack him.

Just about this time it occurred to the lieutenant in command of the party that to beat the outlaw in a horse-race was not exactly what he had been sent to do; and, nettled at the reckless bravado of the outlaw, also feeling a little ashamed of his own conduct so far in the affair, the able and intelligent officer—history has not preserved his name—mounted his men to attack Ozark, who was entrenched in the saloon upon the ground floor, watching through the window and the glass door for the approach of the attacking force.

Whether the officer in command intended to ride straight into the saloon or not it is impossible to state, as his plan of operation has never been made public; probably he would have found it a difficult feat to accomplish, as a horse could not possibly have got through the door with a man on his back.

The soldiers came up first at a smart trot, then slackened little by little into a walk.

The moment they came within range, the outlaw coolly and deliberately leveled the shotgun, and put a charge of buckshot into the breast of the sergeant on the right, killing him instantly; the soldier next to the sergeant got the second barrel in the right shoulder, putting him completely out of fighting trim.

The lieutenant gave the word to fire, and the soldiers—nervous at the bloody effect of the outlaw's fire—poured an irregular and scattering volley into the shanty, and then, urged on by their officer, who was eager to retrieve his blunders, dashed toward the saloon.

Ozark, who had received a ball in the fleshy part of his left arm, but had sustained no other damage from the soldiers' fire, seized his revolver and poured six shots, one after the other, as fast as he could fire, into the troops charging onward.

One of the foremost men was killed outright, two more were slightly wounded, and the attacking column suddenly broke, seized by a panic, wheeled their horses round and ingloriously fled back to their former quarters in the court-house, leaving their dead and wounded comrades on the field of battle, and the victory with the outlaw.

Ozark called upon one of the citizens—who had ventured out, seeing that the affair for the present was over—to bind up his arm; then reloaded his weapons, called for some more whisky and another box of sardines, and waited for the next move on the part of the Federals.

Twenty, thirty minutes passed and

daunt features of her queenly little face, with apparently the same interest that he would have looked upon a beautiful horse—cold-blooded fellow that he seemed to be.

Missouri hesitated irresolutely in the doorway for a moment, and then, as if seeing to make up her mind suddenly, stepped out on the piazza, and leaning on the railing, addressed the man, three steps below:

"Mr. Texas, will you give me a little advice?" she asked, abruptly, her voice low but firm.

The overseer was considerably astonished at this question. For about the first time since Missouri had known him he betrayed traces of embarrassment.

"Of course, Miss, I shall be most happy to do so, if I can," he replied, earnestly.

"You are the only one that I can ask, and I am about to speak to you as if you were my brother."

"And I'll try, Miss, to give you a brother's advice!" Texas exclaimed, abruptly, and he advanced one step up nearer to the girl.

The color in Missouri's face heightened just a little, at the movement, but she stuck resolutely to her position.

"I should perhaps not have dared to have spoken to you but that I know father has told you all about it. I overheard the conversation between you and father last night on the piazza. I could not help hearing it, for my room is right overhead, and I was sitting at the window when he began, and father always speaks so loud. I suppose he got into that habit in the army. Now, Mr. Texas, I haven't any one else to advise me, so I ask you. Father said to do just as I liked; he would not advise me either one way or the other. I must make my own choice."

The overseer seemed puzzled. Leaning on the railing of the steps, he caressed his chin with his hand in a manner which plainly indicated that he was in deep thought, while Missouri watched him with an eager, earnest gaze, and every now and then the soft, red lips of the girl would compress firmly together, and a determined light would shine in the clear, black eyes.

"Well, Miss, I really don't know as I am quite the proper sort of person to advise you in such a matter as this," the man finally answered. "Mr. Fayette I have never met, personally, but from what I have heard of him I should judge that he'd make a pretty good match for almost any young lady. I've heard it said that he is one of the rising men of the State, and as he has both ability and money to back it, there's no telling how high he may climb before he gets through."

A look of impatience mingled with vexation passed swiftly across the maiden's face.

"You think that it is a good match?" she asked, in quite a sorrowful tone.

Texas just looked a little astonished at the manner in which the question had been put, but gravely proceeded to answer it.

"Yes, Miss, it's my honest opinion that it is."

"Then it doesn't make any difference whether I care any thing about him or not?" demanded the girl, imperiously, her eyes flashing and her lips trembling. "I must sell myself to him because he has money and I am poor—worse than poor—a beggar, by father's account. I must marry a man that I know I don't love."

"You didn't say anything about that," the overseer retorted, bluntly. "You asked me if I thought that it was good match?"

"And you do not think I ought to marry him unless I love him?" the girl said, slowly.

"Of course I don't!" Texas replied, promptly. "A marriage without love is but an earthly contract, and can never receive Heaven's sanction."

The girl opened her eyes widely at this speech. She had never heard the overseer express himself in such a manner before.

"I suppose that father will have to give up the plantation, though," she said, reflectively, "and then you will lose your situation." And, as she spoke, she shot a quick glance under her long, dark eyelashes at the face before her.

"I reckon that if the General makes up his mind to emigrate, he'll give me a chance to go along with him, Miss," the overseer said, cheerfully. "I shan't quarrel about the wages, and with a fresh start on new ground, 'tis ten to one that your father will be able to hold his own with the world. I wish I had a few thousand dollars!" Texas said this quite abruptly, and he advanced another step, so near to Missouri that her dress touched his knee.

A short, quick breath came from the parted lips of the girl, so hardly drawn that it seemed almost like a sigh; the long lashes came down over the brilliant black eyes, and it was a minute or so before she spoke.

"What would you do with the money?" she asked, slowly.

"Speculate on it," he replied, tersely.

The long lashes came up quick, and the big eyes of Missouri were opened to their fullest extent. That the girl was both surprised and disappointed was plainly evident in her face.

"Speculate—how?" she asked.

"Lend it to your father—without conditions, and depend upon gratitude to give me the treasure which money should not buy."

Missouri's face grew red as fire; then, with a great effort, she looked the overseer full in the face; the full, black eyes were now soft and lustrous in their light.

"I am glad you haven't got a thousand dollars," she said, slowly, "even though it might save the plantation; but—"

"But what?" asked Texas, quite eagerly, taking her little right hand between his own brown paws as he spoke.

"I do not think I could like the man who only lends my father money half as well as the one who saved my life," the girl replied, with a charming smile.

"Dinner, Missy!" exclaimed Butterly, from the house-door, interrupting the conversation.

But, enough had been said; eyes had spoken if lips had not, and two very happy people sat down to dinner under General Smith's roof, that day.

What was money weighed 'gainst love in a young girl's mind?

(To be continued—commenced in No. 181.)

Out of Gotham.

BY CORA CHESTER.

"Or, I would be a daisy,
If I might be a flower."

sung little Prue Alden, in a shrill, pitifully-sweet voice, as she bent over some pale, deformed blossoms in her window, and gasped for breath in the close, sultry room.

The music died away, wafted out of the attic and called forth an answering note from a swallow under the eaves, and the poor little songstress herself stopped the busy wheel of the sewing machine, pressed one thin hand to her heart and wiped away a few troublesome drops from two hazel eyes.

Such pretty eyes as they were, too, with the light of faith and hope still in their bright depths as if the soul behind those windows was nearly ready to break its distressful union with its partner of clay, the body.

Not but what Prue Alden's body was a very entrancing bit of clay. Half a dozen poor clerks, boarding on the floor beneath, could have told you that; for many were their praises of the little angel up-stairs, her fair face, gawdies eyes and tiny feet. They never forgot those last, for Prue, innocent of coquetry as she was, had a very cunning way of lifting her black dress until the tips of those shabby little boots would come click, click, over the muddily crossing, up the carpetless stairs, and then die away in her box of a room, unconscious of a dozen eager eyes watching their progress.

Now how came Prue Alden, beauty and quondam heiress, in such a plight? It was the old, old story of swift disaster following close upon the heels of affluence. Prue's father, grandfather and great-grandfather had lived for self alone; had gloried in brown-stone palaces, fast horses, old wines and fair women. The god of this life, Mammon, had blinded their better vision, and was the one pure lamb of the flock to reap the bitter consequences of their folly?

It would seem so, for Prue Alden found herself alone on her sixteenth birthday, poor, helpless as an infant, and worse than all, beautiful as an angel. Her parents, such as they were, had left their helpless little one (their greatest pride during their lifetime) had been their child's ignorance and incapacity to cope with a vile world alone. Dissolute father and fashionable mother would be in part responsible for this baby soul. Whither would it drift, and would her innocence and purity protect her or make her an easy prey to those who go about seeking whom they may destroy?

No friends came near her in her adversity. Fashionable school-girls, her late friends, turned up *retrograde* noses a trifle higher and wondered, in a vague sort of way, "what Prue Alden was going to do with herself?" Relatives on this side of the world she had none; so her handsome home was sold, and she found herself under the care of her late housekeeper, as a dependent in the house of her father's servant.

The position grew more and more galling to this slight girl, the sole inheritor of the Allen pride, and one day she left quite unceremoniously and took up her quarters in a strange boarding-house, a trifle nearer downtown, and a short distance from her late home.

There are all grades of boarding-houses in Gotham, and poor little Prue went slowly down the ladder as her purse daily grew thinner and thinner.

She began to turn her dresses, think twice of riding in a horse-car, and became dangerously familiar with all the disgusting sights and smells that haunt the streets of lower New York.

Her employment at present is something new to her, and she works away all the busy noon, never stopping for rest or food, for how can she afford either?

The sewing machine goes click, click, "way into the dusky twilight, and then Prue picks up skirt and waist of the linen suit she has been making, ties a shabby hat under her chin, and wends her way through by-ways into the more decent quarters of Canal street.

Prue wonders, as she enters a large establishment, what her day's hard work will bring, and counts up the necessities she will buy with the coming money. She takes her place among a mass of females, all uglier, older and thinner than herself, and waits her turn to be paid. Her heart sinks as she watches the sharp-eyed gentleman (?) over the counter pull apart seams, toss pieces back in their baskets, and point out defective work. One poor woman takes back only a shirt, reproach and no pay for her labor. Then Prue's turn comes.

"New hand, eh?" inquired the black-eyed Adonis behind the counter, with an insulting leer. "And a very pretty one it is, too. Now, we'll see if its work is as pretty as its face."

Prue blushed scarlet and drew her veil over her red cheeks, only making eyes, complexion and wonderful golden hair more dazzling behind ganzy lace.

"What are your prices, sir?" inquired our heroine, in a weak, trembling voice which stuck in her throat.

"Weist badly made," said the man, eyeing the neat seams critically (falsifying and lying were necessities of his trade). "Skirt will do. Let me see; waist one ruffe—skirt one founce. Well, Miss, seeing you're young and pretty, we'll say thirty cents."

"Thirty cents?" gasped Prue, with difficulty restraining her sobs; "thirty cents for making a certain linen suit?"

Wholely and good pay, too. Well, well, make ready for these others; if the prices don't suit, you needn't take any more."

He knew full well that among the starving women of that vast city plenty would be only too willing to exchange their life-blood for the paltry sums he offered.

Prue reflected a moment, and only a moment, then cool prudence got the better of her indignation. She must have work at any price; so she turned again to the smiling, oily face bending over the counter so close to her own.

"I'll take another suit and try again."

Instead of answering the misnamed Prue to a chair, paid off the few miserable beings remaining, and then turned to her again with what he considered an irresistible bow.

"Here are some aprons to make. This work is better paid. Thirty cents for a dozen. Smart one can make five dozen per day. Nice work like these white suits, now," pointing to a mass of elaborate puffing, embroidery and tucking, "bring very high prices. We pay well, better than other downtown firms. Do these, and we will give you fourteen dollars for the dozen suits."

Prue looked at the endless rows of tucking and reflected in her ignorance that even woman's work, poorly as it was done, was worth more than these monopolists pay their human machines.

What constituted the difference between the ability of this high-browed, intellectual girl, and the broad-faced, sensual man leering across the counter?

One could have spoken three languages, given you the biographies of all the favorite authors, and demonstrated the most difficult problems in Euclid. The other could speak only very bad English, scarcely knew that the world ever had a literature, and was blissfully unconscious of mathematics further than the axiom:

"Pay low for labor and charge high, and a great deal remains for your own pocket."

I think Darwin would have decided that the fair-faced woman was a trifle higher in the scale of humanity, nearer the god, further from the brute creation than he; yet this same advanced ape can draw a salary of two thousand per annum, while Prue Alden starves in a garret on sixty cents a day. So much for our republican equality and liberty!

Prue began to see that the room was thinning and the man was growing unpleasantly familiar. She held out one hand for the bundle and, as the last shabby woman left the room, inwardly decided to leave at once, with or without work. She had scarcely taken three steps ere her new admirer leaped the counter, took up a tall, soiled hat, and with her bundle

of work under his arm, begged leave to see her home.

Prue stopped aghast at the audacity of the man. What, a low, vulgar wretch dare to address her in this style?

Oh, to be a man, that she might knock him down! But, alas! she was nothing but a poor, friendless girl, so she could only clench her nails into her pink palms with fruitless rage.

"No, sir; I wish no company. You have already detained me till after dark. I am going at once and alone!"

He grinned from ear to ear. It was so amusing to witness her caprice. What could she do, he reflected, a young, pretty girl, if he chose to pursue the chase?

Nothing; women were always offish and wanted to be coaxed.

"Oh, but my dear little pretty, I wouldn't think of letting you go alone this time of night. Come, take my arm, and there's no need of your ever wanting a bean of nights. I'll see you home and be only too happy, I'm sure."

Prue measured the distance to the door and ran for it, flew down the long stairs, out into the starry night, and drew a breath of relief as she met a policeman on his round of duty. Poor child, she still cherished a deep awe and respect for these stern guardians of the law in her foolish little heart.

On she ran from street to street, always hearing footsteps behind her, till she reached the door of her miserable home, then a single glance over her shoulder discovered to her the disagreeable fact that a short, fleshy man, in soiled white clothes and tall hat had stopped on the corner and was eying the house with his wicked black eyes.

Prue never entered that establishment again, but in her walks to and from her work, she often met her odious admirer, and several times he spoke to her.

One sultry July day, when everything was literally baking in the streets, and Prue staggered along nearly exhausted with the heat, she came face to face with her *betennoir*. The noon-day bells of the city were clanging in her ears and a feeling of faintness, dangerously familiar of late, caused her to clasp both hands to her head with a sudden dread of coming disaster. She never distinctly remembered what followed.

Two country horses, maddened with strange sights and sounds, were coming toward her with terrific speed. In the wagon, swinging from side to side, sat a fat old lady wildly waving a blue cotton umbrella, and screaming at the top of her remarkable voice. Beside her stood a young man, with Herculean arms pulling with mad force at the reins, and veins standing out like cords in his efforts to stop the horses.

Prue felt an awful sensation of a fall and crushing wheels, then amid the yells of a crowd, with the hot breath of a black-eyed man upon her fair face, and an overpowering feeling of dread and horror, Unconsciousness, the twin brother of Death, drew near, mercifully closed her eyelids, and Little Prue knew no more.

"Seems to me, Ebenezer, them beans had best be in market to-day. Deacon Vanderwhacker's people druv' down a hull hunk fore sunrise, and here 'tis high noon 'nue o'clock. Well, well, young people hain't as they used to be when I was a gal. Why, many is the time I milked ten cows fore sunrise, and done a week's baking fore seven in the morning. Come, go ketch the horses, and I'll harness up right off. Let's see—I want a paper of pins and half a yard of that calico the Cooneses bought last week, and Mirandy wanted me to buy her a pair of gams. What airs that gal does put on, though, since she came from York. I remember when she'd go barefoot the year o'clock. Well, now forsooth she's afraid of the night-dews. Night, fidlisticks! I'd spank her and send her to bed if I was her mother, and not let her be gallivanting home from sing-ing-school with every young fellow in town."

Ebenezer, by the way, a fine-looking specimen of nature's noblemen, blushed up to the roots of his curly hair; for he was not so obtuse but what he knew that his respected man-a referred to the many times Mirandy had kept him out in the night-air talking soft nonsense to him, and that she thought him a fool for "dangling onto that gal's apron-strings," as she expressed it.

Eben was far from being in love with Mirandy, but time and a persistent fair one can work wonders, and I know not but what this susceptible youth might have been sacrificed at the fair Mirandy's altar ere another month, had not wisest Fate issued another edict and woven together with her fairy fingers the tangled thread of Eben Fay's and Prue Alden's lives.

What a contrast to the dusty city was this cool, shady farm-house, with its waving maple trees, goldenrod, and vine-covered porch, darkened spar-room, and luxurious chintz lounge just within the window. Yet there were two sensible people preparing to leave it all for a dreary pilgrimage along dusty roads to a far distant city, just for the purpose of selling a few beans and buying half a yard of calico and a paper of pins!

No one had put it in just this light to good Mrs. Fay, or she might have seen the folly of her ways. She had a vague idea that a multitude of onerous duties called her to New York, and would have indignantly denied an accusation that a foolish desire to cut her calico dress in a style a little newer than "that stuck-up Mirandy Jones's" was in reality driving her to the city upon such a day.

When Prue opened her eyes to the outer world again, she found, not the face that had haunted her wild visions, a hated face with insulting leer and wicked eyes bending over her, but the motherly, sweet countenance of Mrs. Fay.

Prue looked around the strange, pretty room, gave one more reassuring glance up at the pleasant face, then fell back upon the pillow and lost herself again.

Many, many weary days did Prue wake up to find that same kind nurse bending over her, and loving hands ministering to her wants. Then came delightful convalescent days, when Prue was wheeled by the shady window, and Eben and she together watched the busy throngs in the streets outside and read to each other pages from their life histories.

These two had made grand strides toward a firm friendship in those days, and after many persuasions from both mother and son, Prue was at last taken to the old Fay homestead, and established in the pleasant best chamber, where the sun danced over the bright carpet and the birds caroled their matins for Prue's especial benefit.

What a rest to poor, overworked Prue, after the noise, lathsome smells and sights of Gotham! Never to know what it was to want a meal, urged to the utmost of her digestive powers by the hospitable old lady, and loaded down with such very obtuse angles of pie and cake. This was indeed happiness after all the anxiety of the past year! Then the quiet pleasure of gazing out onto vast fields of waving wheat and grain, the blessed feeling of content and peace, soothed her heart and quieted her overtaxed brain. Poor little Prue had indeed found a haven of rest.

The happy days flew by fleet-footed, and one glorious October afternoon Prue woke up to the knowledge that she must take up the burden of life again, and change her new-born joy for sorrow.

The thought was all the more bitter as she stood there on the porch, gazed over the lazy scarlet woods, heard the threatening of the meadow birds, and realized that Frost, the harbinger of Winter, had commenced his work, and that a fireless home and hungry days would soon again be hers.

The golden glory of an October sun fell over her shining hair, pink cheeks, and perfect features, but the shadow of the future, as she saw it, drew all the pretty dimples from her cheeks, and intensified the color of those hazel eyes.

Eben stood in the doorway and watched the lovely face whose every change awakened some new emotion in his heart. He, rough and uncultivated as he surely was, could yet appreciate and worship the delicacy and refinement of her nature. She had a well-worn copy of Tennyson in her hand, and her white apron was filled with scarlet maple leaves and autumn treasures. Her face lighted at sight of Eben.

"Seth, Eben," holding up a cluster of nuts; "aren't these beauties?"

There was trouble in his honest eyes as he sat on the steps beside her. Instead of answering he drew a letter from his pocket, a letter with a city postmark, and held it toward her.

"Not for me?" questioned Prue, with wide-opened eyes. "Why, I haven't a friend in New York who knows of my whereabouts."

"Neither did your correspondent know of your flitting, I should say, for I found this in the city post-office waiting, I don't know how long, for one Prue Alden to step forward and claim it."

"You've been to New York to-day, then?" questioned Prue, with a little shudder. She could not yet look her uncertain future calmly in the face. The letter, large, square and fashionable-looking, lay in her lap blinking at her in its mysterious-looking envelope, and with trembling fingers Prue tore it open. Nothing to be frightened about in its contents, surely, for it was only a very foolish epistle from a very foolish young lady cousin, who had been abroad at the time of Prue's misfortunes, and who now took it into her head, upon her return, to look up her almost-forgotten relative.

"Where has my little birdie flown to?" read the letter, from this rather sentimental young lady. "I've made lots of inquiries about you, but it's all of no avail. Now, darling, I must tell you a great secret. I am going to be married this fall to that dear old Van Dyke. You know he's wealthy and aristocratic, and made the match while we were in London, so of course I am perfectly crazy with work and can't write much this time."

Augustus (that's my future spouse), says he hates boarding, so we shall take a house at once, and we've got it picked out. That lovely brown-stone on Forty-second street where the Delamers used to live. Now, if this letter should ever reach you in your perambulations, write at once and I'll come to you right off. I haven't forgotten how beautiful you are, and I want to bring you out with great *clat* this season. Do come and make ours your home as I hear you are poor, and of course work is out of the question for an Alden. We could never hold our heads up again if one of the family should so disgrace herself. Answer at once and relieve your terrible anxiety. Mamma married an Italian nobleman while abroad, and they return to Europe after my wedding, so I shall be alone. I send you a dozen kisses and *au revoir*.

Your loving cousin, BLANCHER."

Prue's lip curled a little as she finished, at the tone of the letter, and she inwardly resolved that any life would be preferable to that of a pampered dependent, petted one day and scorned the next.

Hence was a temporary home, though, and as such, she would accept it, but the thought of her rich relative was not a pleasing one, so she put the letter in her pocket merely saying in answer to Eben's questioning glance:

"A foolish school-girl letter from a cousin of mine, wishing me to return to New York." Then she opened her book again as if nothing had happened.

"Prue, read to me a little from your favorite. Let me see; here is 'Locksley Hall.' Read, will you, I beg, and enjoy it."

"Oh," laughed Prue, "I have no patience with that raving woman-hater, or with weak, silly little 'Amy' either. The idea of being worried into marrying a low brute. I have no sympathy with weak-minded women. We must look up to a man in every sense of the word. It's a woman's nature!"

The trouble deepened in Eben's eyes, and taking the book from Prue's hand, he read, half-aloud:

"Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower to his level day by day."

What is it within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is: thou art mated with a clown.

And the greenness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down."

"That is what the world will say of us, Prue. Oh, darling, I can not let you go. I love you, uncounted as I know I am, but I will struggle to become what you'd like to have me, if you will only give me one word of hope."

She felt his eager eyes searching her face, and like a dream floated before her a picture of the future as Blanche Alden had painted it. She saw herself "in gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls," courted by all, and followed as only a beauty and belle can be. The tempter brought back from her girlish life the gayeties and pleasures where she had ruled, "Queen rose in the rose-bud garden of girls," and whispered:

"All these can again be yours. Go back, accept your rightful place in the world of fashion, and become what your mother was before you, the admired, loved leader of society."

Eben's voice died away and Prue lived again in the past. She danced through perfumed halls, filled with fair ladies and brave men, and heard sweet flattery, alas, so dangerously sweet to frail woman, whispered in her willing ear.

She had almost turned away from her better angel when a shrill, loved old voice sung from the kitchen a familiar hymn they had heard at camp-meeting only a few days before:

"Vain, delusive world, adieu,
With all of creature good;
Only Jesus I pursue.
Who bought me with his blood:
All thy pleasures I forego—
I trample on thy wealth and pride
Only Jesus will I know,
And Jesus crucified."

What was this world for which she would barter her life's happiness?

Here was an honest love that would never forsake her; a love above all price. As she looked into Eben's blue eyes and realized how dearly she loved him, her worldly ambition vanished as a cloud from her vision, and she saw how petty were the aims for which her ancestors had lived.

Eben caught the shy happiness in her eyes, and bending lower, asked:

"Can we walk the path of life together, Prue?"

"Yes, Eben, and with God's help, we will make it the path that leads to heaven."

Seth Martin's Escape.

BY ARTHUR L. MERVINE.

"You see that peak up yonder?"

We could not help seeing it. With its angles apparently as sharp as those of a diamond, it stood up against the western sky, which was now turned to the color of gold by the setting sun. It was a picture and a frame as fine as ever need to be.

It was the trapper Seth Martin who asked the question. We had encamped early that night at the foot of the mountain range, and our camp-fire had been built, and our supper prepared and eaten. There was nothing more to do but to smoke and tell stories, the usual resort of such as wait to while away the time.

We signified to Seth that we saw the peak of which he spoke.

"Well, boys, it was there that I came the nearest going under that I ever did in my life. It was nothing but Providence that saved me, anyway."

"How was that, Seth?" asked two or three in one voice, eager to get the story. We knew that Seth, in his long life, as hunter and trapper, must have had some narrow escapes; and as he declared this to be his greatest, we felt sure that something of more than ordinary interest could be told.

He did not wait for a second invitation, but began at once.

"Five years ago this fall, I and three others were encamped up to the very foot of the peak yonder. We found plenty of work in the region; and for nigh a couple of weeks we remained on the same camp-ground. Game was plenty and the red-skins didn't trouble us, and we lived as it were up to our eyes in clover."

"I don't know what it was that made me, but I was possessed with the desire to climb to the top of the peak yonder. The more I looked at it, and thought about it, the stronger grew the desire. I bantered the boys to go with me, but none of them were willing. They said they had tramping enough to do without climbing up there, and that I was a fool to think of undertaking the job. I didn't think so then, but I had reason to change my mind afterward."

"One morning I was astir before any of the boys were, and by the time they rolled out of their blankets I had got through with my breakfast, and stood all ready for a start. They wanted to know where I was going, and I pointed away to the top of the peak. They wished me a pleasant journey and tired legs when I came back, and in the midst of a shower of bantering I set out on my trip."

"It may look to you, boys, as though it was an easy job to climb up there, but it ain't so. I never undertook a worse one as I know of. For a long ways down from the top it is as steep as the roof of a house, and all the way you can get up is to cling to the rocks, and so pull yourself along. The sides are all cut up with deep gullies, as though some day or another there had been some terrible storm there."

"It was past noon when I got to the top, and all the way along I had not seen a living thing to fire at. It seemed as though I was all the living thing there was in the world."

"I sat down on the topmost rock and looked around me. It was a grand sight, I can tell you, boys. To the west and north, as far as the eye could go, was mountain after mountain, while east and south the great plain lay stretched out like a sea."

"I had set on the rock about ten minutes when I happened to cast my eyes down the side of the mountain below me, and there I saw the first living thing I had seen since I had parted with the boys."

"It was a red-skin creeping out from behind a huge rock which some day had started from the top to pay a visit to the valley below, but had been arrested in its course by some obstruction it had encountered."

"From the motions of the savage, I saw that he knew of my whereabouts, and that he meant me mischief."

"Another moment and a second savage presented himself, creeping softly as the other had done from behind the rock."

"Another and still another followed, until a half dozen had showed themselves, and in single file came creeping toward the summit."

"That they meant me mischief there was not a shadow of doubt."

"For the space of a couple of minutes I sat motionless watching their motions, and trying to decide what I had better do."

"By that time they were within ten rods of the rock on which I sat."

"With my rifle I could have picked off a couple of them before they could have reached me, but that would not have helped me much. The others would have only thirsted the more for my life."

"My best way, I thought, was to try and give them the slip, if possible."

"As I have said, there were deep gullies down the side of the peak, worn by the action of the storms out of the solid rock."

"Gliding from my seat in the opposite direction from that in which they were approaching, I entered one of these which was so narrow that by reaching out my hands I could touch both sides at once."

"The bottom of the gully was so steep that I could hardly keep my footing as I went down it with a rush, trying my best to get a good distance away before they should discover my whereabouts. A minute later and a shout from above told me that I was discovered."

"A moment later I glanced upward and saw a sight which made my blood run cold."

THE MESSAGE-BIRD.

BY FRANK M. IMBRIE.

The radiant white-winged message-bird
Taps softly at Memory's door.
Freighted with thought-pearls gathered
From Time's well-beaten shore.
It sailed in air-drawn agonies,
Where golden sunbeams creep
In burnished waves, o'er far-off graves,
The spot where our loved ones sleep.
Where moonbeams gild an emerald slope;
Where wild birds seek their home;
Amidst the aisles of the green wood,
Where evening songsters roam;
Where marble gleams through restless boughs,
And zephyrs moan and weep
Their plaintive lays, "Heath Lullaby,"
O'er graves where our loved ones sleep.
Sadness holds sway in Memory's court—
The burdened past is ours,
But with thy coming, sweet thought-bird
Rare pearls of comfort showers.
There's bright light in the shadow-vaile,
The pardoned no more weep;
The mystic veil was rent in twain
O'er graves where our loved ones sleep.
Their souls met kindred worshippers
In realms beyond the skies,
And priceless pearls they gather from
The shores of Paradise.
Oh, hugger, sweeter of thought
When bidding earth farewell,
We'll wander through the ether blue
To homes where our loved ones dwell!

Managing a Widower.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

TIME: half-past four o'clock of a charming
September afternoon, in the year of grace
1870.

Place: a clematis-shaded side veranda.
Dramatis personæ: Olla Livingston, a radiant
little brunette, whose witching eyes were over-
flowing with mischief; Lillias Silvertown, a fair,
hazel-eyed girl, with the grace of a sylph, and
the air of a queen; a young lady fresh from
New York only a month before, who was visit-
ing at the Livingstons and who had played sad
havoc among the hearts to let, in and around
the village.

"So you can't decide between my handsome
brother Lu and Mr. Cornwall, Lillias? You
had better put on your thinking-cap and make
up your mind at once. There are advantages
on both sides, you know; one, that of being
mistress of Mr. Cornwall's elegant mansion on
the hill; the other, of having me for your sis-
ter-in-law."

Olla drew down her saucy lips demurely, her
black eyes sparkling as she watched the rich
blushes surging under Lillias' fair skin.

"Lu's a dartin', I tell you, Lillias; only he's
poor, you know; besides, I rather think—
There comes Mr. Cornwall—mercy, Lil, is my
hair coming down?"

And before the answer came, a gentleman
came up to them, admiration plainly depicted
in his eyes, as he took in all the beauty of the
scene, in which Lillias Silvertown was the center.
A good-sized, finely-built man, perhaps
thirty-five or forty years of age, with a mild,
pleasant face, framed in with curling hair of
chestnut, that had grown rather thin. He al-
ways dressed very nicely; drove a splendid
team, and was generally considered a "great
catch."

His wife had been dead seven years, when
Lillias Silvertown came to Cornwallville—the na-
tives called it "Cornellville;" and when the
hitherto indifferent widower began paying un-
mistakable attention to the fair stranger, specu-
lation ran riot; buxom village maids grew jeal-
ous till they were green; and their butter-mak-
ing mamma declared Miss Silvertown "a painted
minx;" so that between the flirtation going
briskly on between Lu Livingston and Lillias,
and Mr. Cornwall's evident intention of "cut-
ting Lu out," there was enough excitement
abroad in the village to keep it awake.

But Mr. Wilfred Cornwall had his secret un-
easiness; for those seven years of widower-
hood he had had it; and now that he had
dared come forward and pay his addresses to
pretty Lillias, he was every moment fighting to
conquer what would not be conquered.

And this was his secret fear.

He had been blessed (?) with a wife who had
been the ruling spirit in the mansion on the
hill; she had carried her scepter in high-hand-
ed consciousness of her inestimable worth,
and, to her honor be it chronicled, never was
house better governed, or garden better or-
dered than hers. She had loved her husband af-
ter her selfish way, and the selfishness and
tyranny she exercised while living, and that
her husband at first did not combat, and then
dared not, proved her ruling passion strong in
death. On her death-bed, she had solemnly
adjured him never to marry again; threatening
awful visitation if he did, and declaring that
no other woman should come in and enjoy
what she had helped to earn and save.

And Wilfred Cornwall, whose grief was not
feigned, whose fear was as genuine, promised,
and Mara Cornwall died.

For seven years he had been held in a bon-
dage that most men would have scorned; then,
when he saw fair, lovely Lillias Silvertown, his
dread succumbed to his newly-born admi-
ration, and in spite of the secret uneasiness he
went on and on; and Lu Livingston went on
and on, his heart set on Lillias Silvertown, his
whole intention to get the inside track at all
hazards.

And pretty Lillias? Lu's handsome face and
courtly air made her heart thrill; while her
ambition was fired to attain to the position of
the mistress of "Hill-Nest."

The library at "Hill Nest" was not yet
lighted, for the long July day, though past the
sunsetting, left a bright radiance that was de-
lightful away up on the lights.

Mr. Cornwall had just come home from a
call on Lillias, his mind made up to marry her,
if she would have him, despite the superstition
that had grown with seven years' suns
and showers. He was quite confident she would
not reject him, for that very afternoon, when
Olla and Lu had left them alone for an hour,
and he had asked her what her taste would be
in furnishing a large square room, like the best
parlor at "Hill Nest," she had blushed so pret-
tily and told him.

He sat leaning back in a large stuffed green
reps chair, the dusk growing dusker, thinking
about Lillias and imagining her stealing softly
in and laying her little hand on his head; then,
of a sudden, cold, clammy sweat broke out all
over him, for he saw between him and the win-
dow—well, what? A female figure, wild and
wan, with outstretched arms, as if uttering
some silent imprecation on his head; not the
ghost of his indignant Mara, certainly, for this
object wore a long, dismal cloak and horrible
black gloves; its hair was flowing in fierce dis-
order; and, yet, despite these human appoint-
ments, Mr. Cornwall certainly smelt brimstone,
or grave mold; in his terror he did not know
which, or he certainly would not, even to him-
self, have admitted the possibility of his wife
coming from a place where such a scent as
brimstone is supposed to exist.

At any rate he caught a glimpse of a hollow
face, glowing eyes, and a horrible mouth—
and then he buried his face in the back of the
chair.

"Wilfred Cornwall," it said, in a strange,
far-off voice, that made his very feet grow icy
cold. "I am come from your wife, whom you
promised never again to marry. She bids me
remind you of your vow. If you keep to your
word all will be well; if not—*beware!*"

There was a rushing sound, a fresh smell of
brimstone, and then Wilfred found himself
alone again.

Alas for Lillias Silvester and any possible
hopes of "Hill's Nest!" For Mr. Cornwall
wrote her a note inside of five minutes bidding
her adieu, telling her he would start, very un-
expectedly, for Europe.

Lillias read her note with a little blush of
wrath, and a curl of her pretty lips that did not
indicate a broken heart; and Lu Livingstone
watched her across the room with a peculiar
rogueishness in his eyes.

"What is it, Lil? an offer of heart and hand
from Mr. Cornwall? Shall I congratulate
you?"

He came carelessly over to the sofa where
she was sitting.

"As if I'd marry Mr. Cornwall! Lu, when
are you going to stop teasing me about him?"

"When I am sure you are going to have
him. If I thought you loved him, Lillias, never
again would you hear a word from me."

His voice grew more serious, and Lillias
twisted the note around her fingers.

"Then you will have a right to tease me for-
ever, Lu, for I never shall love him."

"I wish I had the right to do something else
than tease you, Lillias. Will you give it to me?
the right to love you forever, my darling? my
Lillias?"

He leaned his handsome head against her
shoulder, and looked boldly up in her eyes.

"Did you not know I was jealous all the
while, Lillias, because I loved you more than
he? You do love me, don't you?"

And so it happened that Lu and Lillias were
engaged after all; and when Lillias would won-
der what took her quondam lover so suddenly
away, Olla and Lu would laugh and declare he
must have seen a ghost or something.

Not till young Lu was five years old did his
proud father tell Lillias of the joke he perpe-
trated to get his rival out of the way; and
Lillias will frown and declare she never can get
over it, while the happy light in her eyes speaks
plainer than words her perfect content with the
way they "managed the widower."

cab for before she recovers, so much the better
for my plan."

Murdock led the way, followed closely by
Benton carrying the girl, while Bob brought
up the rear.

Swiftly through the forest they went.

A half-hour's march up the Kanawha and
Murdock halted by the bank of the river.
Drawing a dug-out from its concealment in
some bushes that overhung the water, by its
aid the party crossed the river.

On the other bank of the stream, they again
plunged into the forest—first, however, care-
fully concealing the dug-out in a similar hiding-
place to that in which they found it.

After a three hours' tramp through the
thicket, they came to a little log-cabin in the
center of a little clearing. The cabin bore the
marks of decay, and the long grass that grew
thick over the threshold told that the builder
had long since abandoned the dwelling.

Virginia had recovered from her faint some
time before the party had reached the solitary
cabin.

Terrible indeed were the feelings of the
young girl. A prisoner in the hands of the
merciless red-men—for she had no suspicions
that her captors were white—she shrunk from
the thought of what her fate would be. Then,
too, when she remembered that she had seen
her lover fall before her eyes, perhaps mortally
wounded, she felt as if her heart would break.

The two disguised men placed the girl in the
cabin; then Bob left Benton alone with the
maid. Murdock was afraid that Virginia
might recognize the borderer in spite of his
disguise; but as Benton was a stranger there
was but little danger that the girl would sus-
pect her captors to be of her own race and blood.

Benton removed the bandage from the eyes
of the girl.

"Squaw—prisoner to Shawnee," said the
disguised white, imitating the manner and
speech of the red-skin. "No try to run or war-
rior take scalp."

Then Benton joined the other two on the
outside of the cabin, closing the door carefully
behind him.

"Well, the game is treed," said Bob, with a
chuckle.

"Yes," replied Murdock, a grim smile of
satisfaction upon his sallow face. "Now you
two keep watch here and be sure that the girl
does not escape. I will return to the station."

The little ravine looked bright and beautiful;
the rays of the fast-dying sun glinted down,
gayly through the tree-tops, and played in
beams of lambent light upon the pale face,
whose open eyes glared, as if in mockery, on
all around.

The rocky glade was as fair to look upon
with the dreadful evidence of man's crime ly-
ing in its center, as when, but a short hour be-
fore, its leafy branches had formed a living
frame to a picture of true love.

A huge black crow flying high and lazily in
the air caught sight of the white face that so
steadily stared with its stony and fixed eyes at
the sky.

The bird of evil omen swooped round in
circling flight above the motionless figure.

Each circle was smaller than the previous
one, each second brought the bird nearer and
nearer to its destined prey.

Still stared the eyes upward—still on the
white face played the flickering sunbeams.

With a downward swoop the carrion-bird
alighted on the breast of the stricken man.

The blood that stained the hunting-shirt of
the silent figure crimsoned the talons of the
disgusting bird.

With a hoarse note the crow flapped its sa-
ble wings as if in gloating triumph over the
coming feast.

One short minute more and the great eyes
would stare no more at the sky above. The
beak of the carrion crow would be scarlet with
human gore.

But, ere ten seconds of that minute passed
away, a slight rustle came from the tangled
thicket that fringed the ravine.

The crow, with a hoarse note of anger,
spread its wings, and, cheated of its prey—
cheated of the great eyes and the banquet of
blood—soared lazily upward.

Then, from the thicket with stealthy tread
came a gaunt wolf.

A moment the beast stood upon the edge of
the ravine. Then it scented the blood that had
trickled from the breast of the man who lay
motionless upon the rocks.

With noiseless steps the gaunt beast came
onward. It halted by the side of the motion-
less figure.

The fierce eyes of the wolf peered into the
face of the human, and the huge jaws opened
and shut with an ominous clash.

Then from the tree-top the carrion bird
stooped again to earth.



Alarmed for the moment by the flap of the crow's wings, the wolf displayed its white tusks in anger.

RED ARROW,
THE WOLF DEMON;
OR,
The Queen of the Kanawha.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOB," "THE MAN FROM
TEXAS," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPA," "ACE
OF SPADES," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES
OF NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER X.

THE CABIN IN THE FOREST.

ONE of the white red-skins—for the two
who had seized Virginia were the dark-skinned
stranger, Benton, and the tool of Murdock,
Bob Tierson, painted and disguised as Indians—
tied a handkerchief, tightly, over the eyes of
the senseless girl, completely blindfolding her.

When this had been accomplished, Murdock
came from his covert in the bushes, and ap-
proached the two.

The blackened muzzle of Murdock's rifle
told plainly that it was he who had fired the
shot which had stricken the young stranger,
Harvey Winthrop, to the earth, even while the
kisses of the girl he loved were fresh upon his
lips.

"The girl has fainted," said Benton, who
supported the light form of the hapless Vir-
ginia in his arms.

"So much the better!" exclaimed Murdock;
"it aids our purpose. We must convey her at
once to the lonely cabin of the Kanawha."

"And this critter?" said Bob, kicking the
motionless form of Winthrop, with his foot,
carelessly, as he spoke.

"Is he dead?" asked Murdock.

Bob knelt down by the side of the young
man.

"Yes, he's gone dead," replied the borderer,
after a slight examination.

"I did not think it likely that he lived," said
Murdock, with a grim smile. "I seldom have
to fire twice."

"Well, you've settled him, for sure," ob-
served Bob, with a grin.

"Leave him alone then; the crows and
wolves will finish him before the morrow,"
said Murdock.

"He ought to have known better than to
fool round this piece of calico," observed Bob,
with another grin.

"He won't be apt to do it again."

"No, dog my cats, if he will!" cried Bob,
expressively.

"Can you carry the girl, Benton?" asked
Murdock.

"Yes, easily," replied the one addressed,
raising the motionless form of the young girl
in his arms, apparently without an effort.

"Let us be going then. If we can reach the

Her absence will be discovered before long and
search will probably be made. If they dis-
cover the body of the stranger, this Winthrop,
in the ravine, which they will be sure to do if
any saw them leave the settlement together,
which is probable, it will lead all to suspect
that the man was murdered by some strolling
red-skins and the girl carried off by them."

"But may they not trace us?" asked Benton,
shrewdly. "There are keen scouts in the sta-
tion. If they once strike our trail, they'll be
apt to run us to earth."

"There is little danger of that," replied Mur-
dock. "After we left the ravine we struck the
regular trail leading up the river. There are
many fresh footprints on the trail; it will be
difficult for even the best Indian scout on the
border to pick out the marks left by us from
the others. Besides, crossing the river would
be apt to throw the keenest trailer off the scent.
I do not think that any one will discover or
even suspect our agency in the girl's disap-
pearance."

"Tain't likely," observed Bob.

"No, I think that you are right, and that
you will succeed in your plan regarding the
girl," said Benton. "There was a strange sound
in the voice of the man as he uttered the sim-
ple sentence, and a peculiar expression in his
dark, snake-like eyes. Murdock did not no-
tice the strangeness of the tone nor the look."

"I can not fail," said Murdock, decidedly.
"You will need food for the girl. Here in the
hollow of this tree," and Murdock led the way
to a small white oak, some dozen paces from
where they stood, "is some dried deer-meat. I
think I shall rescue the girl to-morrow," and
Murdock laughed slightly, at the idea, as he
spoke.

"There is a small hole under the logs
in the back of the cabin, by which I can creep
inside and appear to the girl in my new char-
acter of a saving angel, perilling all to rescue
her from the hands of the red-skins."

"Yes, but may she not discover this hole and
escape through it?" asked Benton.

"No, a heavy log on the outside, that can
not be stirred from the inside of the cabin, pre-
vents that."

"To-morrow, then, you'll return?"

"Yes, to-morrow."

Then Murdock left the twain to watch the
cabin and the prisoner, and plunging into the
forest took his way back to Point Pleasant.

And in his heart, as he walked along, he glori-
ed over the success of the plan that had struck
a hated rival from his path and given entirely
into his power the girl whose fortune he craved.

We will now return to the little ravine
wherein, stark and ghastly, lay the form of the
young stranger, Harvey Winthrop; the man
who had left home and friends to carve out a
future by the banks of the Ohio, and who had
fallen by the ball of the assassin, without even
a chance to struggle for his life.

Alarmed for the moment by the flap of the
wings, the wolf lifted its huge jaw and dis-
played its white tusks in anger. The prowling
beast was willing to fight for the human ban-
quet.

But the carrion-crow and the huge gray wolf
were comrades of old in the great green wood,
and many a banquet had they shared together.

The crow opened its beak and the wolf lick-
ed its jaws as they stood by the side of the fallen
man.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SURPRISE.

BOONE, concealed in the bushes behind the
fallen tree, on which sat the Indian girl and
the red warrior, cursed the unlucky star that
led the twain to select the place of his conceal-
ment for a stolen interview.

The scout hardly dared to breathe lest he
should betray his presence to the two.

They, however, looking with eyes full of love
upon each other, thought only of the happiness
that they enjoyed when thus together.

The girl was the daughter of the great chief,
Ke-ne-ha-ha; her lover was a young brave
known as the "White Dog." A warrior young
in years, but who had already distinguished
himself on the war-path against the foes of the
great Shawnee nation.

The children of the wilderness, wrapped in
the joy of the stolen meeting, had little thought
of aught else, and never for a moment sus-
pected that within arm's length, a listener to their
conversation, lay the great ranger and scout,
Daniel Boone—the man whose death-dealing
rifle was destined to tumble many a plumed
and painted warrior to the earth.

The scout, who fully realized the danger of
his position, could see no possible way to es-
cape. He knew full well that the slightest
movement on his part would inevitably betray
his presence to the two who sat on the trunk of
the fallen tree. Once discovered, every war-
rior in the Shawnee village would be quick on
his trail.

One thought only consoled Boone. From the
conversation of the squaw and chief—Boone
understood enough of the Shawnee tongue to
comprehend what was said—he might learn
something concerning the Indian expedition.
If he could gain important information, and
manage to escape without betraying his pres-
ence to the Indians, then his mission would be
accomplished.

"Is the chief satisfied?" asked the girl, with
a smile, gazing full into the dark eyes of her
lover as she spoke.

"Yes," replied the warrior. "Le-a-pah has
kept her word. She is the singing-bird of the
Shawnee nation. The White Dog will love
her till the great lamp in the sky grows old and
the spirit-lights fade and die forever."

"Le-a-pah is the daughter of a great chief;
he would be angry if he knew that his child
met the young brave by the forest," said the
girl, sadly.

"The white Dog is a young warrior, but the
scapels of the Delaware already hang and dry in
the smoke of his wigwam." The tone of the
young chief was proud as he uttered the
words that told of his prowess.

"The chief speaks with a straight tongue,"
and the girl looked with pride into the manly
face of her lover. "Le-a-pah loves the White
Dog, but the great chief, her father, has said
that she must be the wife of the warrior who is
called Black Cloud. The heart of Le-a-pah is
sad, for she can not love the Black Cloud."

"The Black Cloud is old—the singing-bird is
young. Would her father mate the bounding
spring with the chill autumn? It is bad!" And
the young brave shook his head sadly.

"The Black Cloud is a great chief," said the
girl.

When the White Dog comes back from the
war-path against the white-skins on the Ohio,
he will be a great chief, too. Many white
scapels will hang at his belt, and his tomahawk
will be red with the blood of the long-rifles,"
said the chief, proudly.

Boone, from his hiding-place, listened in-
tently when the warrior spoke of the expedi-
tion to the Ohio. This was the very informa-
tion he was after.

"The white-skins are many; the Shawnee
chief may fall by their hands," and a shadow
of apprehension passed across the face of the
Indian maiden as she spoke.

"Then his spirit will go to the long home be-
yond the skies, and in the spirit-land will chase
the red deer. But, if the White Dog comes
back to the banks of the Scioto, then Le-a-pah
must be his wife and dwell forevermore in his
wigwam."

"The Shawnee girl will be the wife of the
young chief whom she loves as the sun loves
the earth, or she will never sing in the wigwam
of a chief."

"Good!"

The young brave drew the slight form of the
unresisting girl to his heart.

"The chief will love the singing-bird while
he lives; when he dies, her face will be in his
heart," said the warrior, fondly.

"When does the chief go on the war-path?"
asked the girl.

"Three sleeps more and the Shawnees will
burst like a thunder-cloud on the pale-faces,"
replied the Indian.

"On the Ohio?"

"Yes," answered the chief.

"Now, if the red heathen would only say
what," muttered Boone, listening anxiously.

"The white-skins will fight hard," the girl
was thinking of the peril that her lover was
about to encounter.

"The red-men will fight as they have never
fought before," said the warrior. "The toma-
hawk and brand shall scourge the pale-face
from the ground that the Great Spirit gave to
the Indian. The waters of the Kanawha shall
run red with blood. The Shawnees have not
forgotten the many braves that fell by the
deadly leaden ball of the white-skins many
moons ago, by the Ohio and Kanawha."

The chief referred to the defeat sustained by
the Indians at the hands of the border-men
commanded by Lewis, which took place some
years before the time of the action of our story.

"It is against Point Pleasant, then," said
Boone, to himself, as the words of the Indian
fell upon his ear. "Well, let 'em come! I
reckon we can blaze 'em as bad the second time
as we did the first. Now, if these young crit-
ters would only make tracks out o' this, how
quick I'd make a bee-line for the Ohio. But—
dog-gone their copper-colored hides—they
don't seem at all in a hurry to go."

The scout was right in his thought. The two
lovers were in no hurry to bring their love-
meeting to a close. It was probably the last
chance that they would have of being together,
and they were anxious to improve the oppor-
tunity. Love is the same the world over, whether
it springs in the heart of the savage, be-
neath the spreading branches of the oak in the
forest wilderness, or in the breast of fashion's
votary in the crowded city.

Warmly the warrior pressed his suit and told
of the deathless flame that burned within his
heart. Coily listened the girl to the avowal
that she so loved to hear.

The lover eagerly pleaded for a farewell kiss
from the lips that he had ne'er touched. Shyly
the Indian maid refused the favor, though in
her heart she consented.

The chief clasped the girl in his arms. She,
with assumed anger, freed herself from his em-
brace and pushed him away. The chief, losing
his balance in the struggle, tumbled over back-
ward from the log, coming down plump on top
of the scout concealed in the bushes behind the
tree.

Quick from the throat of the Indian came
the note of alarm. He realized instantly that
the form concealed in the bushes must be the
form of a foe.

With a mighty effort, Boone rolled the chief
to one side, then sprang to his feet, prepared to
fly for his life.

The Indian girl shrieked with terror when
she beheld a pale-face spring up amid the
bushes.

Her cry attracted the attention of the Indians
in the village, and, with hasty steps, they
rushed toward the line of timber, anxious to learn
the cause of the alarm.

Boone felt that desperate effort alone would
save him. A foot-race through the forest with
a score of Shawnees was the only chance, but
to escape the vengeance of the Indians would
require a fearful effort.

As the scout started, his foot caught in a
clinging vine, and over he went on his face.
Before he could recover, the young chief, the
White Dog, was upon him.

The Indian was sinewy and stout of limb,
yet he was no match for the stalwart scout.
With a grasp of steel, Boone grappled with the
red warrior.

For a moment they swayed to and fro over
the earth; the scout trying to break the grip of
the Indian, and he striving to hold the well-
known foe until his brethren should come to
his aid.

The Shawnees were approaching fast. Their
shouts rung

Dog, but the Indian girl perceived her lover's peril, and sprang to his aid, grasping the hand of the scout just as he was about to plunge the knife in the red-man's breast.

The red chief, taking advantage of the girl's aid, twisted his leg around that of the scout, bore Boone backward to the earth, upon which the combatants fell with a heavy shock. A second more, and the Shawnee warriors surrounded the contending men.

With many a cry of triumph, they bound the daring pale-face who had lurked so near to the Shawnee village.

CHAPTER XII.

KENTON SEES THE WOLF DEMON.

AFTER having secured with tough thongs of deer-skin, the stalwart limbs of their prisoner, they bore him forward to where the fire burned in their village.

All the inhabitants, attracted by the noise of the capture, had left their lodges and now pressed forward to look upon the prisoner.

Great was the astonishment of the Shawnees when the flickering light of the flames, falling upon their captive, revealed to them the well-known face of Daniel Boone, the great scout of the border.

A howl of delight resounded through the Indian village at this discovery. The red-skins had no foe whom they dreaded more than the man they now held, bound and helpless, a prisoner in their midst.

A grim smile was upon the features of Ke-ne-ha-ha, the Shawnee chief, as he looked upon the face of the man who had so often escaped him on the war-path.

"The white-skin is no longer an eagle, but a fox; he creeps into the shadow of the Shawnee village, to use his ears," said the chief, mockingly.

"The Shawnees have already had proof that I can use my hands," replied the scout, nettled by the words as well as the tone of the savage. "A chief that is not fox as well as eagle, is not worthy to go upon the war-path. His scalp should be taken by squaws."

The Indians could not dispute the words of Boone.

"What seeks the white chief in the village of the Shawnees?" asked Ke-ne-ha-ha.

"Guess, and maybe you'll find out," replied the captive, coolly.

"The white-skin comes as a spy—a foe into the village of the Shawnees," said the Indian.

"When did any of your nation, chief, ever come except as a spy on a foe to the houses of the whites?" asked Boone.

"Ugh! the white-skin has stolen the land of the red-man. Chanted him with lies. Ke-ne-ha-ha is a great warrior—he will take the scalps of the long-knives and burn their wigwams," said the Indian, proudly.

"You'll have to fight some afore you accomplish that, Injun, I reckon," replied Boone, whose coolness and courage astonished the red warriors.

"The white-skin shall die!" said the chief, fiercely.

"I reckon we've all got to die, sometime, Injun," answered Boone, not in the least terrified by the threat.

"Let my warriors take the prisoner to the wigwam of Ke-ne-ha-ha," said the chief.

The order was instantly obeyed. The prisoner was carried to the wigwam—one of the largest in the village. In the center of the lodge a little fire was burning.

The scout was laid upon a little couch of skins within this lodge; then, in obedience to an order from the great chief, the Indians withdrew and left the captive alone with Ke-ne-ha-ha.

The chief's wigwam stood only a few paces from the bank of the Scioto, that stream running close behind the Indian lodge.

After the Indians had placed the helpless prisoner within the lodge, they returned again to their scalp-dance around the fire, excepting a few warriors, who under the leadership of the White Dog—who had suddenly found himself famous by his capture of the great scout—made a circuit of the forest surrounding the Shawnee village to discover if there were any more white foes lurking within the wood.

The search was fruitless. No trace could they find of the presence of a white-skin; and so, finally, they came to the conclusion that the daring ranger was alone. The Indians then returned to the village.

The escape of Kenton from the search of the Indians is easily explained. He had approached the village on the west, and skillfully taking advantage of the cover afforded by the bushes, had like Boone, reached the edge of the timber. From his position he commanded a view of the village, and from his concealment beheld the capture of his friend. Guessing shrewdly that the presence of one white man might lead them to suspect that there were others in the neighborhood, he determined to withdraw from his dangerous position. He had seen no sign of Lark since he had parted with him at the hollow oak, and he came to the conclusion that Lark had not yet reached the village.

Kenton retreated from his exposed position. Slowly making his way through the wood, his eyes fell upon a large oak tree. The thought suggested itself to him that in the branches of the oak, he might find shelter.

So up into the tree he mounted. Once more in his hiding-place, veiled in as he was by the leafy branches, he felt that he could bid defiance to any search that the Indians might make.

Hardly had Kenton adjusted himself comfortably in the tree, when he heard a slight rustling in the bushes to the right of the oak. The keen ear of the alert scout instantly knew that some one was moving cautiously through the thicket. The sound came from the direction of the village.

Kenton thought that, possibly, it was Lark, who, like himself, had scouted into the Shawnee village, and was retreating to safer quarters.

Then, through the dim aisles of the forest came a dark form gliding onward with stealthy steps. In the uncertain light, Kenton thought that he recognized the figure of Abe Lark, the scout. Bending down from his hiding-place, Kenton was about to warn him that a friend was near, when the dark form crossed a little opening upon which the moonbeams cast their rays of silvery light, and Kenton caught a glimpse of the form as it glided through the moonlit opening.

The lion-hearted scout almost dropped from the tree when his eyes fell upon that form. The hair upon his head rose in absolute fright: his eyeballs were distended, and cold drops of sweat stood like waxen beads upon his bronzed forehead.

Well might he feel a sense of terror, for there below him glided what?

The vast proportions of a huge gray wolf, walking erect upon his hind legs, but the wolf possessed the face of a human!

A moment only the wolf—man or phantom—whatever it was—was beheld by the astonished scout, then it disappeared in the gloom of the thicket.

With the back of his hand Kenton wiped the perspiration—cold as the night-dew—from his brow, and he said to himself: "That was a

"I've seen it!" he muttered to himself. "It's the Wolf Demon. Jerusalem! I'd rather fight forty Shawnees than have a tussle with a monster like that. I always thought that the Injun story 'bout the Wolf Demon was all bosh, but now I've seen it; so near the Shawnee village, too! There'll be a hurricane soon, or I'm a Dutchman."

Leaving the scout to his meditations, we will follow the course of the terrible figure that had so affrighted stout Simon Kenton, who was one of the bravest hearts on the border.

Cautiously and carefully through the thicket the creature glided. It was making its way to the Scioto river.

Suddenly the figure paused, and apparently listened for a moment.

The sound of footsteps of the Indian warriors, headed by the White Dog, scouting through the forest, broke the stillness of the night.

But for a moment the mysterious Wolf Demon listened; then as the Indians came nearer and nearer, with a leap, as agile as that of the squirrel, the terrible form seized hold of a branch of the oak beneath which it was standing, and swung itself up into the concealment of the leaves of the tree.

The Indian braves came on and paused for consultation under the branches of the very tree that concealed, in its leafy recesses, the terrible scourge of their race.

"Wah! The pale chief is alone," said one of the warriors; "no other pale-face is within the wood."

"He is a brave chief to come alone to the lodges of the Shawnee nation," said another of the warriors.

"Boone is a great brave," said the White Dog, who felt a natural pride in extolling the bravery of the prisoner whose capture was placed to his credit.

"He will never take the war-path against the Shawnees again," said one of the braves, with an accent of satisfaction.

"No; his scalp shall blacken and dry in the smoke of a Shawnee's lodge," said the White Dog.

"It is good," responded another, with a grunt of satisfaction.

"The great white-skin will die by the fire, and the red braves will dance around him with joy," said the Indian who had first spoken, with a fierce expression of delight in his voice.

"The long-knife was alone—no more are within the wood; let us return to the village," said the White Dog.

The other warriors granted their assent, and the party, turning upon their heel, took the way leading back to the village.

Hardly had the figure of the rear-most savage disappeared in the gloom of the wood, when forth from the tree came the terrible figure.

Lightly it bounded to the ground, and, with a glittering tomahawk clutched in its paw, followed swiftly but cautiously on the track of the red-men.

The Indians, however, kept together. Had one remained behind the other, he would never have lived to tell what struck him.

The terrible form followed to the edge of the timber, and ground its teeth in rage at the escape of its foe.

Then it headed again for the river, keeping within the shelter of the timber. The river reached, the mysterious prowler took advantage of the stream's bank, which had been followed out by the washing of the water, to reach the wigwam of Ke-ne-ha-ha in which Boone was confined.

There, in the very shadow of the wigwam, the terrible figure lay upon the ground concealed by the darkness, and listened intently.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 190.)

Recapturing a Prize.

A STORY OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY HENRI MONTCALM.

OLD Josiah Cringle, the richest merchant in Grayport, and withal as staunch a patriot as ever hated the king, was pacing up and down his wharf puffing and blowing like a locomotive on a side-track. Here was his finest schooner, the Lively Lass, loaded to the lines all ready for sea, and now that meddlesome Englishman down at Boston had taken it into his head to send around the Sentinel, sloop of war, to keep the schooner from sailing. It was too bad! So Mr. Cringle declared to Capt. Zephaniah Cobb, commander of the Lively Lass, as that worthy came down from the warehouse.

"It's no use, squire," answered the skipper, philosophically; "the Lass is rightly named, but she ain't lively enough to run out of Grayport Bay with that fellow walking up and down outside," and the old sailor nodded his head toward the Sentinel, whose topsails could be seen three miles to seaward over Coweset Point, where she was standing back and forth across the narrow mouth of the bay.

"Tis too bad," again groaned the merchant, halting in his walk and angrily regarding the man-of-war. "Four o'clock, and you might have been a hundred miles to southward with this wind, if it hadn't been for that cursed Britisher. Now, the schooner will lie here till she rots, I suppose. There's no knowing when we get her out."

"Trust her to me and she shall go out to-night," the words were spoken close behind the merchant's ear, and in a tone so calm and assured that the two men turned in astonishment. A young man, slight in frame, yet from his air and dress evidently a sailor, stood beside them. His face was very handsome, and with his naval cap and a jacket of a material finer than was usual, somehow forced the impression that he was a gentleman. Yet Josiah Cringle eyed him with distrust. "And who are you?" he cried, "who thus boast of ability to do what is plainly impossible?"

The young man met the merchant's eye with one equally haughty and fearless, as he replied: "One who once held the king's commission, but now fights for liberty; and who can make his boast good."

"Hold you now a commission from Congress?"

"No; but from one whom Congress entirely trusted."

"I would fain see it before I believe it," said the merchant, somewhat mollified, but still suspicious.

The young man hesitated, but observing a sneer forming on the merchant's lip and that he was turning impatiently away, he drew a document from his breast-pocket and reluctantly extended it, saying:

"I doubt me much if I do right in exhibiting this, but our army has sore need of the supplies, and I must take the craft out to-night at all hazards. I show this to you in confidence and—surely I may trust you, sir?"

"Oh, of course, of course," answered Cringle, receiving the document. As he read, a look of pleased surprise came into his face, and then, merely glancing over the rest of the paper, he held out his hand. "Enough, enough, sir," he said, cordially. "Do me the honor to shake hands with me. And pray forgive me the rude-

ness with which I met your proposal. You will grant 'twas but natural. Captain Cobb, you are under this gentleman's orders; you will obey them as you would my own. Sir," turning again to the stranger, "the schooner is in your hands. Can I do any thing else for you?"

"What does the crew number?"

"Six men besides the officers and cook."

"I must have at least half a dozen more men. Can they be found here?"

"Ay, a dozen if you like, as stout fellows as ever faced a son-of-a-bitch."

"Can you get them here before dark?"

"Easily"—and with a few more words and a hearty grip, Josiah Cringle strode away to do the bidding of this young stranger, in whom, though he had known him so short a time, he seemed to have perfect confidence.

As for Captain Zephaniah, he had already gone on board his vessel in high dejection.

"A pretty pass 'twas I have come to," he muttered, grimly, "when men hand their vessels over to the king's officers without a word. Poor Lass!" and he patted the main-boom affectionately; "but I'll not desert thee though the devil himself was at the helm. But the mint I see the least sign of treachery in that thunderin' epy. I'll blow his brains out sure's my name's Z. Cobb."

No blockade-runner could have selected a better night for his purpose. At nine o'clock all things were in readiness, and by eleven the Lively Lass was beating down Grayport Bay surrounded by darkness so dense that it seemed almost to obstruct her passage. The stranger had as yet taken no part in the working of the vessel. But now he called Captain Cobb to his side. His tone had that sharp sternness which one may often notice in men accustomed to command commanders. Zephaniah sullenly approached.

"Captain Cobb," said the stranger, "can I rely upon the courage and discretion of the ten extra men sent on board to-night?"

"Yes, sir; they are men I've known half a lifetime and not half a day," answered Zephaniah, meaningly.

"The young man appeared not to notice the innuendo. 'Well, sir,' he went on, briefly, 'I wish you to take those men, with two more from your own crew, and secrete yourselves in the hold.'"

Captain Zephaniah shut his teeth down so hard that he nearly bit his own tongue off.

"No, sir," he shouted, "Squire Cringle, he put me under your orders, and I'll obey you so far as is reasonable. But, by heavens! sir, I'll not leave the deck of my vessel to-night for you nor him, either."

An angry flush crossed the stranger's brow at these words; but he controlled himself. He regarded the other sternly for a moment, then said, his countenance relaxing:

"Sir, I respect your feelings and can not blame you. You shall stay on deck. But see that the men are stowed away where they will not be discovered should the enemy capture us. Be careful of this, sir, for my life at least will depend upon it."

So saying, the stranger went below for the night glass, while the captain walked moodily forward to execute his orders. Twelve men were carefully concealed forward, with orders to make themselves as comfortable as possible, but not to show themselves under any circumstance until the signal.

Half an hour after Zephaniah stood at the wheel, the stranger at his side.

"Now," said the latter, at last, "you may keep her off a couple of points. The Englishman must lie somewhere about half a mile to leeward."

"Yes, sir; and if you keep off any more we shall go within hailing distance of him—it's already lightin' up considerable in the east."

"I am quite aware of all that. Do as I say, sir."

The old sailor growled defiantly, but obeyed. Ten minutes more, and suddenly there loomed up before their eyes the huge mass of hulk and sails belonging to the Sentinel. At the same instant a hoarse voice hailed them through a trumpet: "Heave to or I'll blow you out of water!"

"Hard a-lee!" sternly commanded the young stranger.

"Not by a jugful!" yelled captain Zeph, in open mutiny, as he jammed the helm hard up to windward, and the schooner scudded away before the wind.

One step the stranger took toward the skipper. "Captain Cobb," he said, fiercely, "it is impossible to get this schooner out of Grayport Bay without her being captured. You must trust to me. Another word, and I'll shoot you dead."

And while he spoke he seized the wheel, and with a few rapid whirrs brought the schooner up in the wind, just as a heavy shot from the sloop-of-war came ricocheting across her quarter.

Captain Zephaniah dropped his arms doggedly and walked forward without another word. The Lively Lass was just as good as taken now, and all through the treachery of a cursed Britisher. The four men remained on deck gathered about the skipper, in sullen discontent. Meanwhile the Sentinel had backed her main topsail and a boat now came alongside with the first lieutenant.

"This is the Lively Lass, is it not?" he asked, as he leaped on deck, addressing the stranger, who seemed to be the only man aft.

"It is," answered that gentleman, adding his arms.

"Commanded by you, sir?"

"Commanded by Captain Cobb, sir," said the stranger, motioning toward that personage, whose curiosity had now drawn him aft again.

"And pray, who are you, sir?"

"Lieutenant Morris, of His Majesty's ship Centaur."

"Do you expect me to take your word for that?" demanded the Englishman, incredulously.

"I expect you to take the king's word for it," answered Morris, coldly drawing his commission from his pocket and offering it to the other, who read it carefully. It seemed to have much the same effect upon him as the other paper had upon Josiah Cringle, for he said, as he returned it:

"I beg your pardon, Lieutenant Morris; the document is certainly genuine. But is not this a strange situation for a king's officer?"

"It is to my being in this situation that your ship owes this prize. I have put her into your hands."

"Yes," burst out Zeph, unable longer to contain himself, "the blasted raskil has come to the end of his line with his lying papers, and now he's run us under your very nose. But he shan't live to brag of his cowardly trick. Take that, you smooth-tongued villain!" and with an oath he leveled his pistol at Morris' head and pulled the trigger. But the English lieutenant had anticipated his design, and struck up his arm just as the pistol exploded. The ball went over Morris' head, and he coolly turned and thanked the Englishman, saying: "This at least will convince you of my sincerity."

"It will, indeed," the other answered, "and I can give no better proof of my trust in you than by placing the life of your charge. Indeed I am compelled to do so, as we are very short of officers. You will take the schooner directly to Boston."

Morris extended his hand.

"Sir," he said, "I am infinitely obliged to you. I was about to ask as much. Will you send a prize crew on board at once with iron for this obstreperous captain and his men?"

The Englishman went to the side, and ordering most of the boat's crew on deck, dispatched the boat to the sloop for a prize crew and the necessary irons. The boat soon returned with ten stout fellows; and the four men and two mates of the Lively Lass, together with Captain Zephaniah, submitted to be ironed as quietly as if they were half-awake.

Indeed, several of them now and then rubbed their eyes and looked around in a dazed manner, not entirely certain that the events of the past hour were not all a dream. When all things were arranged and Lieutenant Morris found himself still on the deck of the Lively Lass, but with a British crew under his command, the English officer said, as he went over the side: "You will follow as nearly possible in the Sentinel's track. Our business here is finished and we shall go back at once. If, by any chance, you lose sight of us, proceed at once to Boston. We shall meet again there."

So saying, he waved his hand in adieu, and was pulled back to the ship. Both vessels were put before the wind, the schooner, at starting, but a short distance behind.

Morris now divided his crew into two watches, five men being amply sufficient to work the schooner; and half of them were sent below. Then leaving the deck in charge of an old sailor, who served as first officer, he descended into the cabin.

About two o'clock in the morning Captain Cobb was awakened from his uneasy slumbers by a hand laid upon his shoulder.

"Who's there?" he growled.

"It is I."

"Who's that?"

"The man you shot at."

"What d'ye want now?"

"I am going to release you."

Captain Zephaniah uttered a low whistle.

"Well," he said, doggedly, "if you do I'll be much obliged to you; but I give ye fair warnin'—the minute I'm free I'll throttle you if I'm big enough."

"You'll do no such thing, Captain Cobb," and the stranger laughed, softly. "Haven't you learned to trust me yet?" and without more words he unlocked the captain's fetters, and the two together hastily freed the other men.

The group now stole softly forward to where the twelve men were concealed. They found them to a man, sound asleep and entirely ignorant of the fact that the schooner had been captured by the Sentinel. The story was quickly told, however, and with whispered earnestness Morris gave his instructions. There were five men on deck, two aft, one amidships, and two forward. The one amidships was sound asleep. They were to go to the hatchway, spring suddenly on deck, and while two of them ran to close the fore-castle-hatch, and thus secure the watch below, it would be an easy matter for the rest to overcome the men on deck. It was of the utmost importance, however, that every thing should be done in perfect silence, as the Sentinel was still in sight, she having shortened sail, to enable her consort to keep up with her.

With these instructions the men crept stealthily on deck, and strange to tell, the vessel was recaptured without any disturbance sufficiently violent to attract the attention on board the Sentinel. Each of the drowsy watch on deck was confronted with a loaded pistol, almost before he really knew that anybody was stirring; and each surrendered in preference to having his brains blown out. They were carefully bound and gagged. As for the watch below, they slept on as peacefully as ever.

"Now," said Morris, in low tones, as he took possession of the wheel, "the only thing remaining is to give the sloop-of-war the slip, and we shall have run the blockade successfully. Captain Cobb," he continued, to his first officer, who now was following him about like a dog, very much ashamed of himself, but not quite ready to own it even yet, "have you any spare spars?"

"Ay, ay," answered the skipper, with far more alacrity than he had yet shown.

"Very well; get them over the stern for a drag. We'll soon drop astern of the Englishman."

Three heavy spars, dragging through the water, made the Lively Lass much less lively, and ere long the Sentinel began to gain on her sensibly. But the officers of that vessel, though they must have perceived this fact, did not seem disposed to delay any longer for their consort. Gradually the distance between the two vessels increased, and at length Morris, peering forward through the darkness, being no longer able to discern the outline of the Sentinel, hauled aft his sheets; and the Lively Lass, with the wind still blowing free from the north, stood out toward mid-ocean, and at daylight no enemy was to be seen.

Just before Morris went below to turn in after his weary night's work, Captain Zephaniah came up to him rather sheepishly and held out his hand.

"I beg yer pardon, lieutenant," he said, "for all my blunders. It 'ud 'a' ben a hard one for us of 'd' 'a' shot you last night. But if you'll take my hand now, you'll allers find it in future one that won't fail you."

Morris shook the old salt kindly by the hand, and when four days after they parted at the port for which the cargo was destined, the two were the best of friends. Often after that Zephaniah found himself wondering who this man could be who had done him and his owner such signal service. It was not until after the war that he learned from old Mr. Cringle that Lieutenant Morris was no other than the right-hand man and bosom friend of JOHN PAUL JONES.

Ytöl:

Lost, Wedded, Widowed and Rewon.

A STORY OF TRIALS AND BALMS.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.

AUTHOR OF "STEARING A HEART," "BLACK HAND," "IRON AND GOLD," "RED SCORPION," "PEARL OF PEAKS," "THE BEASTS OF THE HUNGRY CANYON," "CAT AND TIGER," "FLAMING TAILSMAN," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

A MEETING IN THE TWILIGHT. Mysterions are His ways, whose power brings forth that unexpected hour. When inches, that never meet before, Shall meet.

—COWPER.

"I fear that love disturbs my rest. Yet feel not love's impassioned care; I think there's madness in my breast, Yet can not find that madness there."

—ODES OF ANACREON.

WEEKS had gone since the night of our last chapter. A pall of mystery shrouded Wilde Manor. No explanation was given of the singular events which transpired in the lone room; even Lord Somers was kept in the darkness of wonder, relative to what he had witnessed.

Ytöl was busy as usual, with her duties as governess, the household management progressed quietly; but Mrs. Layworth seemed to

have lost her customary vivaciousness—she was not the same brilliant woman she had been, something rested on her mind, heavy and enervating.

There was a degree of stealth and hushful bearing in the movements of the servants—voices were low, and uneasy gossipings prevailed among them, from the hall-porter down to the scullion-maid. A somber look appeared to settle everywhere, filling the dimly-lighted passageways with imaginary shadows of goblin terrors.

This, however, was relieved, to a certain extent, by a sly bustle necessary to the preparation of the Lodge for occupancy—that occupant Dwila St. Jean, as the reader has observed.

The Lodge was a small dwelling of block-stone and slanting roof, rather romantic in appearance, as it lay half-hidden in the thick foliage of vines and trees. It had long been unused; the creepers tangled wildly against its dusty, cobwebbed walls; bushes and branches grew at random around it, and the little wire fence was bent and crooked out of all repair.

The habitation was in sight of the Manor House—one of its two windows peeping like an ambushed sentinel, from behind the overgrown verdure.

And Ytöl's enemies had come here, to watch, like a vulture soaring high to its prey, an opportunity to pounce upon and destroy.

All unconscious of the dread surveillance, the young governess roamed through the shady paths with Cecil and Walter, or sometimes alone; though watchful for the appearance of the hideous Dwarf—her keen fears partially lulled—yet dreamed not how close, how terribly close, were they whose apparent object was her destruction.

It was high the twilight of a beautiful day—a day that had dragged wearily for her, as the children, unusually bright and apt, were singularly dull. Worn out by the severe tax, she sought the cool walk that led to the lake.

Autumn was coming on; the leaves and grasses were changing their green hues for the dye of russet, and the flowers, at their gayest bloom, refreshed her with their breathing of a thousand hushed perfumes.

She felt the need of solitude—the want that sometimes govern

"Why, Lord Somers, my ears certainly deceive me! What are you saying? It is some extraordinary good humor on your part; you are enjoying yourself forgetfully."

"Will you answer my proposal?"

"Answer? Your proposal? What do you mean, my lord?"

"Is it not plain? I have asked you to be my wife."

His tone was rather practical for a lover; yet his earnestness was plain, there was an unmistakable sincerity in his speech. Ytol, astounded by the proposition, stared like one dumb-struck.

"Answer me—"

"Cease, my lord; let me begone," she said, starting to pass him.

He laid a hand upon her arm—laid it there gently, detaining her, and gazing ardently into her incredulous, upturned face.

"Do not misunderstand me," he whispered.

"Lord Somers, you surely are jesting?—you are sporting unkindly with me!" exclaimed Ytol.

"I swear to you—if I may swear—that I love and would marry you."

"Marry me? Oh! no, my lord, you would not wed with such a man: a poor governess, a friendless girl, whom you would despise, in after years, for her past history of wretchedness. You do wrong to talk to me thus. Let me go, believing that this is some innocent joke; and I forgive it."

"Ytol, listen to me," he interrupted, warmly; "I offer to marry you and be your friend. If you are poor, it is in money alone, and I will make that up. Do not doubt me in this. My motives are pure; I propose to you in all the sincerity of honor. Will you accept?"

"I dare not consider it for a moment, my lord! I beg of you, let me go my way."

Ytol spoke frightenedly. She was agitated; the abruptness, the unexpectedness of such a proposal from Lord Somers startled her.

She disengaged his light hold upon her arm, and stepped from him.

"Don't flee from me," he besought, making a motion as if to clasp her sleeve again.

"I can not listen to you—"

"Say you will be mine. Or—" his manner altering suddenly and wonderfully—"well, I see you are taken by surprise. It is natural. Go, then. But remember: Lord Somers has offered you his hand and heart. Tomorrow morning, I'll be sure to seek you, and expect your answer. Think of it, meanwhile—and think wisely. *Ad. rector.* By-the-by, here's the day's paper. There may be interesting reading in it."

Mechanically, she took the paper which he handed her. Her lips were curled; the blue eyes were wide and blank.

Raising his hat politely, he left her, smiling complacently as he turned away.

For a few seconds she stood motionless, staring after him, and then fled back along the path toward the house.

When the spot was deserted, the bushes were thrust apart, and a female stepped forth from concealment.

It was the new occupant of the Lodge—Dwila St. Jean, the girl woman.

Looking after the two, alternately, she laughed lowly.

"Ha! ha! ha! So, Lord Somers is in the web of fascination? Look to yourself, then, Ione Layworth. It is the family history of the Danes, that, if a daughter be first loved by a man, and there is the smallest encouragement to his passion, all the powers of earth can not draw the affection from its idol. So it was when Silas Dufour met Nora Dane; so it was when Silas Layworth met Nora Dane, after her marriage; and I, deserted by my own wife, follow her. The same blood flows, the same beauty of feature exists now as then. If Catdjo does not soon seize Ytol, and she gives Lord Somers so much of one soft glance, there will be a match that Ione Layworth will not figure in."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BOND BROKEN.

"Four things the wise man knew not to declare: The eagle's path athwart the fields of air; The ship's deep furrow thro' the ocean's spray; The serpent's winding on the rock; And Ol man with woman."—HERBERT.

"But there are storms, whose lightning ever glares, Tempests, whose thunders never cease to roll— The storms of love, when maddened to devour, The furious tempests of the jealous soul."—CLAYTON.

Mrs. LAYWORTH sat in the parlor, reading beneath the chandelier of many brilliant fancy lamps.

She was disturbed by the abrupt entrance of Ione.

The face of the beautiful girl was crimson, her eyes flashed fiercely, her jeweled hands were clenched tightly, with the arms stiff at her sides. There were frowning lines across her erst smooth brow, and her whole mien indicated a burning frenzy.

"Well, Ione!" exclaimed the mother, "what does this mean?"

Ione did not reply immediately, but strode back and forth once or twice; then she halted near the oval table, half leaning on it, and swaying under the influence of passion.

"Ione, you are excited. What has occurred?"

"Oh! this is too much!"—breathlessly.

"You thought I had nothing to fear; you advised me not to be jealous. We have both been duped, I say, while an outrage was being practiced before our very eyes."

"Why, Ione?" Mrs. Layworth put aside the book, and contemplated her daughter bewilderedly, hesitating with her utterance.

"Mother, I say we have been outraged!"

"How?"

"By Lord Somers—by this plotting, scheming, pretty-faced governess, Ytol Lyn, or Ytol Dufour. It is bad enough that we should find the heir to the best bulk of uncle David's estate, and be robbed eventually of so much of our wealth; but to have her intrude here, and, by her sly, coy, artful enchantments, destroy all our anticipations for the future—"

"Tell me what this girl has done?" interrupted Mrs. Layworth, rising, while her own glance kindled, and a suspicion of Ione's meaning came gradually into her mind.

"Done?" panted the beauty. "She has won from Lord Somers a proposal of marriage!"

"No?"

"But she has! I heard it. They met, not two hours since, at the lake. It was accident that placed me not twenty feet from them; I was screened by the hedge, and did not lose a word of their dialogue. More; he even told her a deliberate falsehood—told her that we never had been, and were not betrothed. Oh! how I hate him now, where I but tolerated him before!"

"And Ytol?—did she accept?"

Ione was walking to and fro again, unable to remain still.

"No, she refused him."

"Then he is not lost to you yet; and if you are wise—"

"The excited girl wheeled suddenly, and paused. Her lip curled, and her face glowed as if the maddened spirit which consumed her, redoubled by her mother's speech, sent every pulse of blood to cheeks and temples."

"Not lost!" she repeated, huskily; "and do you think I would wed Lord Somers, knowing that he considers his allegiance so lightly?—knowing that he has broached the subject of love to another, while bound to me, and denying my claim upon him? Am I begging for his affection? Am I to tolerate open insult, crush the germ of feeling in my own soul, to retain him? No—I will not. It is at an end. I would not marry him, now, even if, on bended knees, he—"

"Hush!" hissed the mother, sharply, and with a quick, warning sign.

Lord Somers at that moment came upon them. They had not heard his step in the hall. Had he overheard Ione's passionate outburst?

"Good-evening," he said, blandly—the voice of one surprised at an unexpected meeting.

Ione turned from him. How she despised him, just then! She approached one of the windows, and drawing aside the draping curtains, looked out, to conceal her emotion.

Mrs. Layworth, raised in the world's school, smiled pleasantly.

"You've kept yourself rather aloof, my lord."

"I crave pardon for it, if it is a fault. I never tire of rambling around this delightful locality—especially in the direction of the lake," with a glance at Ione, whose back was toward him.

The keen mother detected that glance; she felt that his remark was an intended thrust.

"You were reading," he added. "Do not let me interrupt you."

"Oh, it is no interruption; I was about to retire. You'll excuse me?"

Bowing and bestowing a covert look upon the silent form near the window, Mrs. Layworth withdrew.

She desired the pair to be alone together; she meant to seek Ytol.

As she ascended the stairs she muttered, pettishly:

"How unfortunate! I could curse this girl for the trouble she has made. Did Lord Somers hear Ione?—if so, he is too spirited to consummate the intended match; and thus both money and title slip through our grasp. Ione is foolish. I shall scold Ytol severely—ha! lucky thought: I'll lock her up in her room, until Lord Somers returns to London. He goes in four days. She will not be particularly missed in that time."

With the new scheme running in her mind, she tip-toed in the direction of Ytol's apartment. The nursery was empty; and as the next day was the children's holiday, she knew the governess must be in her room.

But events were to transpire which would take Lord Somers away from Wilde Manor within twenty-four hours.

Mrs. Layworth's fears were correct. Somers had, though unintentionally, been a listener to Ione's jealousy.

When alone with her who was indeed his affianced bride, he calmly folded his arms and surveyed her. There was a cold, haughty expression in his handsome features; his eyes regarded her with a stern, thoughtful look.

"Miss Layworth."

"It required a mighty effort, but she turned slowly round, and met his gaze with admirably simulated indifference.

"Lord Somers," she returned in a monotone of ice.

"Since you have openly expressed a repugnance for our prospective marriage—though not directly to me—perhaps you will now release me, in plain terms, from an engagement which I also, confess to be unsatisfactory."

His impressive dignity was piqued to her.

"S—o," with sarcasm, "Lord Somers has been playing eavesdropper?"

"To the point, if you please, Miss Layworth," with a deepening frown.

"Oh, I am not trying to evade, sir—"

"Shall I repeat my words?" interrupting.

Perhaps Ione smiled somewhat when she realized the true import of the situation; perhaps in the relaxation of temper before a sober view she was prepared to regret what she had said. She comprehended that he must have heard all; he was now acting upon the basis she had given him, and she perceived that it was to be no lover's quarrel, but a breaking off, forever, of their intimate relation.

Still she was too rigidly molded in her pride, too aptly modeled after her sex, to sacrifice, or make retraction, the more so when impelled by the thought of his insult to her vows.

"Be kind enough to release me," he reiterated, after waiting some time.

"I certainly will not hold you to your obligation, my lord, if it is distasteful to you."

"I am free, then?"

"You are free."

He bent his head stiffly and said "Thank you," in a low whisper, then advancing to the table, he seated himself with careless ease, and idly fingered the leaves of the volume which Mrs. Layworth had left lying there.

Ione remained like a statue for a brief space, her eyes anon filled with a glitter as keen as dagger-blades, or softening as her feelings vied in a battle between alternate rage, chagrin, or partial self-reproach. Then without a word, she swept majestically past him—paused an instant in the doorway, as if she would speak—shut her lips within biting teeth—and was gone.

His eyes, unperceived, followed her.

"Let her regret it at her leisure," he mused, half-aloud. "It afforded me a fine opportunity to escape; and I am glad the shackles have fallen so easily."

Ione was in the solitude of her boudoir—not crying like a silly sweetheart, but with delicate brows contracted, stern and dark, as she thought upon the altered state of affairs, and her pink nails cutting sorely into the flesh of her hands—hands that worked nervously, as if convulsively crunching the objects of a scathing reflection.

Somers went out of the spacious parlor, and walked upon the lawn at the side—indulging his fondness for a cigar, and leisurely in the bright moonlight.

His thoughts were of the young governess.

"What love I am capable of," he argued, lowly, to himself, "is Ytol Lyn's—and yet, half-pausing—" it can not be love that I feel for this girl; it is like yielding to some fascination, which her very presence seems to weave. Her innocent of itself is charming; her simplicity is more captivating far than the sniffling grace of a reigning belle; and Ione's beauty fades like a star of sickly radiance when this light is near—Hark!"

He halted suddenly. The sweet strains of music floated to his ears, seeming to come from above.

He was directly beneath Ytol's window. The young girl had an organ there—a temporary gift from Mrs. Layworth—upon which she had taught herself to play. The instrument was not entirely new to her. In the short time she was at Madame De Verne's, she had mastered the rudiments of music; and by close practice while with the Drews, at Rose Grove, and since her coming to Wilde Manor—spurred by both ambition and necessity (two motives of incalculable power, when combined with opportunity), she had accomplished much, and could play with tolerable finish.

The liquid tremor of melody, pure, exact, sublime, yet simple of selection, chained him; he listened like one encompassed by a spell of witchery.

"It is she. I have heard her before," in a low breath. "Ione never could play like that."

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"It is she. I have heard her before," in a low breath. "Ione never could play like that."

The music changed; Ytol's voice grew soft and plaintive, following a weird, stirring accompaniment—an air that was dreamy and rich with pathos.

"She sings like an angel!" he exclaimed, rapturously, while his hearing strained to the utmost.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN UNPLEASANT SITUATION.

"Shall people point at thee with fingers raised? Must thy dishonor to the world be blazed? Must songs be chanted, and from every tongue Where'er thou turnt at the shame be at thee rung?"—FRENCH OF MOLIERE.

Ytol's mind was swimming as she ran from the lake, from the spot where Lord Somers had made his singular proposal.

But she was not long possessed with the feeling of amazement which his words caused. It seemed to her so ridiculous, so utterly out of all reason, that he could have been in earnest—that he really meant his offer of marriage to her—that she readily forced herself to believe it a mere pleasantry on his part, though rather improper considering her position.

Ere she reached the house, she slackened her half-running pace, and was calm again.

Seeking her room at once, she lighted the lamp and seated herself to peruse the paper he had given her. At the moment she entirely banished all troublesome recollection of what had occurred.

But she had scarcely begun to look over the journal when her eyes were caught, by a glaring heading of large type—one that made her start, her face pale, and her heart to beat with great throbs.

TERRIBLE MARINE DISASTER!

WRECK OF THE "PETREL," OF THE PHILADELPHIA-LIVERPOOL LINE STEAMERS!

GREAT LOSS OF LIFE.

"BRISTOL.—BY TELEGRAPH: The 'Ariel,' just in from New York, reports that off Sable Island, she encountered the wreck of the steamship Petrel, Philadelphia, Captain D. W. D'Arcy. The vessel was storm-beaten and partially destroyed by fire. The captain, four of the crew, and a cabin passenger by the name of Jerome Foster were swept overboard and lost in the severe gale of Tuesday night last. The Ariel rendered timely assistance to those who survived, as the Petrel was fast sinking when she came up. The whole cargo is a total loss, damaged by fire and water—nothing saved but human lives. The doomed ship went down shortly after the departure of the rescuers. * * *

Here followed a list of the names of passengers, with a few comments on the amount of loss to particular firms.

Ytol read the account over twice, as if she doubted what she beheld. As she scanned the two names of those she knew, and who were endeared to her, they burnt upon her brain and darted a pang so keen, so deep that her bosom shrank beneath the cut.

Captain D'Arcy—so kind, so generous, the one sole refuge and protector she had remained in the world; Jerome Foster—gentle, noble-hearted Jerome, whom she loved so dearly, and who, perhaps, was at that very time journeying away from where he thought she was, that he might forget what he termed her cruelty and stony coldness of heart; both gone! Where, now, should she turn? Where, now, the strength, the hope that had buoyed her on? What bourn was open, if new trials came netting on her pathway?

The paper dropped from her nerveless fingers; she bowed her head forward on her arms, on the table, and wept.

"I am alone now—all alone!" she murmured. "Oh, God! watch over me, and let my troubles be lighter, that I may bear them without a comforter."

Her world was growing more lonely—oh! so lonely then.

Mrs. Layworth was standing just inside the door.

Ytol looked up and tried to hide her grief.

"My dear, I have something to say," she continued, in a not unpleasant voice.

"Well, Mrs. Layworth."

"I want you to consent to being a prisoner in this room for awhile."

"A prisoner?" exclaimed Ytol, in a voice of surprise and inquiry.

"Yes. Do not be alarmed; I'll explain. A very unfortunate circumstance has transpired. Did I not request you to avoid meeting Lord Somers?"

"You did, and—"

"And yet you were *tele-tote* with him this afternoon at the lake."

"Upon my honor, Mrs. Layworth, I was not."

"Don't tell me a falsehood, Ytol."

"You interrupt me. It is not my intention to speak falsely—my tongue has never been sullied by a lie, for Truth is my religion! My meeting with Lord Somers was purely accidental. I had no idea of his proximity; I abbreviated our conversation to the best of my ability."

"And yet Ione—who was near you unperceived—has him speak in a manner unbefitting his station and honor."

Ytol colored.

"I hope Miss Ione, if she was near, took notice of my bearing toward him. She will certainly bear witness that I could not have sought him, judging by his remarks."

"She is very much worried about it, and, I fear, is inclined to think that you will forget your position, and assume to consider seriously what he said to you."

The young girl's lips wreathed in a bitter smile, and the soft blue eyes lighted with an unconscious brightness as she returned the other's steadfast gaze.

"No, I will not forget my position, Mrs. Layworth. I will not forget how menial, dependent, and what an unhappy girl I am. Your daughter need entertain no fears; I have not thought for an instant to dare her disfavor."

She arose and crossed to the window, dashing away the last lingering tear from her cheek.

"Nevertheless," pursued Mrs. Layworth, "I think it judicious that we should take measures to avoid all possibility of a repetition of the like scene. Will you be sensible enough to do what I wish? Lord Somers will only be here four days longer, and then I will restore you your liberty. You shall be waited upon attentively, and your captivity need not be so very irksome."

"Do as you please," said Ytol, gazing out into the starry, moonlight night. "It will not be necessary to lock me in."

Mrs. Layworth withdrew after obtaining this consent, but she was not fully satisfied; she would not risk anything, and when she closed the door, she noiselessly turned the key in the lock.

In the hall she was confronted by Ione.

"It's too late, mother," with a depressive gesture.

"Too late?"

"I heard all that passed. It will avail nothing; Lord Somers and I are strangers."

"What?"

"The engagement is broken—"

"No—it must not be!" seizing her daughter by the wrist and leading her away. "You must wed him. This wound must be healed. Leave it to me."

Ytol looked hard at the retreating form, the same bitter wreathing of the lips, the self-deprecating expression settled in her pale face.

"Is it possible that there is anybody on this earth who fears me—poor, tortured woman that I am?"

Involuntarily she went to the door and tried the knob. It would not yield. Then she shook her head sadly. She was, indeed, a prisoner.

"After all, it makes no difference; I would be as well off if shut up in here forever."

She turned to the organ, and slowly threw open its cover. Her heavy-laden spirit wanted some such channel by which to relieve its melancholy.

The soul, when weary, finds its richest balm in music; it is the only thing that exists in heaven and earth alike.

IN THE FALL

BY JOE JOY, JR.

The dear old year is in the wane,
The tender year is growing late;
Oh, hearts that love, all things are vain,
How shivery standing at the gate!

The chill wind wanders from the north,
The frost has stripped the forests bare,
And lonely looks the lonesome earth,
And dandelion clothing we must wear.

White in the early morning lie
The frosted paths, souls that aspire,
With longing look for things more high—
Oh, how about that morning fire!

The sun declines toward the line,
And days grow short and grief grows long,
Our wreaths of faded flowers we twine—
And put on boots both stout and strong.

How tender and how passing sweet
The days when leaves were bright and green!
But now those leaves are 'neath our feet,
We've laid our winter parsneps in.

But how we miss the gentle flowers
That brightened the long summer noons!
The sad mid turns to future hours
And heavier coats and pantaloons.

The summer eves with moonlight gay,
What tender vows have they heard told,
To last forever and away—
But now the parlor's awful cold.

The old dead life of summertime!
For long remembrance doth it plead;
We weep and think its death a crime,
And wonder how much wood we'll need.

Alas, how very brief the stay
Of every thing the spirit loves!
We sigh for all that's passed away,
And go to putting up new stoves.

But there are hearts that love us still,
And many a voice whose music stirs
Is left to us our hearts to thrill
With, "Husband, how about them furs?"

DICK DARLING.

The Pony Express-Rider.

A CALIFORNIA STORY.

BY LAUNCE POYNTZ.

IV.

THE sun was high in the heavens over Fairfield's Ranch, and the air hot, sultry and dry, when a young girl came to the gate of the stockade that surrounded the house, and tripped down to the spring on the other side of the great live-oak tree near the gate.

She was a tall, magnificently-formed girl, with long black hair that fell nearly to her waist; and she carried the pitcher balanced on her head with all the upright grace of an Arab maiden.

She had been gone but a moment, when a second girl came to the gate, equally beautiful in face and form, but the brightest of blondes, as her sister Charlotte was the darkest of brunettes.

Sophy Fairfield opened the gate softly, and looked forth. Hardly had she done so, when she was startled by a rustling sound in the tree overhead, and looking up, gave a low scream of surprise and terror. The next moment she was down out of the branches of the tree, where she had been hidden, dropped a tall Modoc warrior; and, not noticing Sophy at the gate, rushed to the other side of the tree, where Charlotte had gone to the spring.

It was the work of a second for quick-witted Sophy, used to frontier perils, to slam to and bar the gate, and to rush to the house for a weapon. She knew, none better, that it was useless for her to venture out and add one more to the victims of Indian barbarity. At such times selfishness is the only course for a woman, and not till Sophy was safe in the house did she feel that she might do something to save her sister from a terrible fate.

It was at the beginning of that sudden Modoc outbreak which startled and alarmed the whole country. As yet the settlers in the immediate vicinity of the scene of hostilities were slow to believe themselves in any danger. Sophy's father, old John Fairfield, had been Indian agent and trader so long that he had grown to think that no Indian would harm him. That very day he had ridden fearlessly away to Yreka, leaving his ranch unguarded, save by the two girls, as he had done hundreds of times before.

Sophy Fairfield knew that she had none but herself to depend upon, and she made her preparations with all the cool courage of a border girl. The house was secured against attack in a few minutes—it was a veritable frontier fortress, easily defended—then the brave girl took down her light rifle, girt herself with a belt containing two revolvers and ammunition, and ascended to the roof of the house to survey the neighborhood.

The summit of the little dwelling was surmounted with a small structure of heavy logs, meant on purpose for sheltering an observer, and the girl found no difficulty in surveying the whole of the horizon.

She had not far to look for her sister. The whole neighborhood of the ranch was deserted; and the presence of two or three cows, grazing outside the stockade as quietly as if nothing had happened, was conclusive proof that the Indians must have departed, as cattle are always uneasy in their vicinity. But a glance out on the prairie revealed the sought-for object.

A single horse, with a double burden, was moving rapidly off to the north-west in the direction of the Lava Beds, and Sophy recognized the figure of the Modoc warrior, while the muffled-up bundle on the horse's croup could be none other than her captured sister.

A strange thrill went through the girl's heart, as she gazed. Her thoughts may be best guessed by the murmured words that fell from her lips.

"She is gone—by no fault of mine—they can not blame me! I did not do it—but I loved Dick first, and now it will not be wrong to love him—poor Charlotte will be killed, and he will be free to love me—I know he would if she had not come between us—they can not expect me to follow her alone—and Dick Darling will be mine."

It was a terrible temptation to the poor girl, Dick Darling, the dashing Dick, darling of all the girls in the Far West, had won two hearts where he had thought to win but one; and had fallen as a brand of discord into the Fairfield family, making rivals of sisters, who, till then, had never held more than one common thought. Only the day before he had left them, to carry the mails from Yreka to the Lava Beds, and now Sophy's rival was vanishing before her eyes, and no blame could attach to her.

The girl watched the retreating figures with dry, blazing eyes for some time, and then turned hurriedly away, murmuring:

"No, no, I can not look longer—I shall go mad."

She ran down-stairs to the little sitting-room, and threw herself on a chair, burying her face in her hands and sobbing. When she looked up, a sudden change came over her face, for the first thing that her eyes rested on was a staring portrait on the wall. It was but a dabb, to cultivated eyes, but to hers, accustomed to it for years, it produced a shock, such as

the best efforts of a Titian could not have compassed. It was the picture of two little girls, with arms entwined, playing with some flowers, herself and sister, as they were once.

It acted on the girl like a stroke of lightning. She jumped up and ran wildly out to the stables, screaming:

"Lotty! Lotty! Dear little sister, I'll die to save you—forgive me!"

In a moment more, with trembling hands, she was taking down a saddle and hastily girthing it on her own fleet Indian pony. Ere the Modoc rasher was out of sight from the ranch, Sophy was mounted and on his trail.

The Indian who had carried off Lotty Fairfield was a tall, muscular fellow, richly dressed, but unarmed, save for a bowie-knife. He found the girl at the spring; seized her with a grasp of iron, and enveloped her in a blanket, ere she could utter more than a single shriek of terror, then dashed her to the earth with a force that half-stunned her; and in a moment had bound a rope firmly round the blanket, securing it so strongly that escape became an utter impossibility. The daring rasher then lifted her up like a log, threw her over his shoulder, and strode away to the cottonwood thicket. Here he found a fine horse fastened to a tree, which he led out, laid the helpless bundle over the croup of the animal, mounted himself, and then fastened the girl to his waist with a long belt.

That done, he started off at a round trot, heading straight for the Lava Beds, and for some time rode on without uttering a word. About six miles from the ranch appeared a grove of live-oak, the central one of all being as gigantic as the one that sheltered the ranch gate. To this grove the Modoc directed his course, quietly dismounted there, and fastened his horse to a tree, then laid his captive on the ground, and spoke for the first time.

"Ha, Missy Lotty, you t'ink Shasta Jim big fool, but he no fool. Me Modoc brave, and me want pretty white squaw—by gosh me have him now. Come, give Shasta a kiss, pooty Missy Charlotte."

As the scoundrel spoke, he drew the keen bowie-knife and cut a slit in the blanket, which he threw open, disclosing the face of poor



"Now den, you be my squaw, I call him all right. If not, I cuts you into little bits just now."

Charlotte Fairfield, gazing apprehensively up at him.

"Aha, Missy Charlotte," said Shasta Jim, triumphantly, "you know Shasta. You know Hooker Tom, kill yesterday by ole man Fairfield. Now den, you be my squaw, I call him all right. If not, I cuts you into little bits just now. Ha, s'pose you like dat? Come, you be Shasta Jim's squaw; he gib you nice lodge, good hunter, plenty buff'lo, much heap eat; s'pose you say yes."

And the savage leered lovingly at his captive, who turned her eyes away, shuddering with loathing, but not daring to speak for fear of hastening her own destruction.

Shasta Jim was about to renew his efforts at entertainment, when he suddenly started and listened. The rapid tramp of a horse at full speed was coming over the prairie. Charlotte rolled herself over, so as to see who was coming, and recognized her own sister, with a rifle gleaming in her hand.

"Saved! It is Sophy!" she murmured, and fell back, as Shasta Jim sprung to his feet, looking uneasy. The Indian, as we have seen, was unarmed except for his knife. But Shasta was too old a warrior to run from a girl, at whatever disadvantage of arms. He waited silently by his captive, whom he held up with one arm as a shield from the expected shot, and kept his knife behind him, ready for action.

Sophy Fairfield galloped up to the savage, rifle in hand, and then wheeled away, as if disappointed. Like a tiger Shasta sprang after and caught her by the flowing skirt. She screamed and dropped her rifle, and Shasta let go the skirt to pounce on the weapon.

It proved to be only a rifle of Sophy's. Even as he stooped for the rifle the girl fired her pistol into his back, grazing him, and Shasta Jim, waiting for no second shot, dropped the stolen weapon and fled.

A moment later the sisters were in each other's arms, Sophy murmuring:

"Forgive me, Lotty darling, I'll never be jealous again. Be happy with Dick."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 190.)

A BABY lately had the misfortune to swallow the contents of an ink bottle. Its mother immediately administered a box of pens and a sheet of paper, and the child has felt write since.

Strange Stories.

THE LADY OF FAENZA.

An Italian Legend of the Fifteenth Century.

BY AGILE PENNE.

FAENZA'S walls were high and strong; Faenza's soldiers were brave and true, and yet town and soldiers alike were ruled by a woman's hand. Francesca Manfredi, daughter of stout Bentivoglio and widow of Galeotto Manfredi was known far and wide as the Lady of Faenza.

No weak-hearted woman was she, but gifted with an iron will and courage beyond proof. Wisely and firmly she ruled Faenza; domestic traitors she repressed, and foreign foes kept in awe.

The famous Black Bands of Ordeloffi were in her pay, and their daring leader, Gian Maria, fought faithfully and well for the Lady of Faenza.

It was the wonder of all Italy that the fair widow remained a widow, and many were the noble suitors that sought her hand in wedlock, but to one and all she said, nay.

Night had come and the mantle of darkness had wrapped itself around the town.

Two cavaliers, closely enveloped in their cloaks, were pacing slowly up and down on the northern rampart wall.

The taller of the two was Gian Maria Ordeloffi, the famous leader of the famous Black Bands. His companion was his lieutenant, Giulio Romano.

The night air is chill," murmured the lieutenant, drawing his cloak still tighter around him.

"Patience, good Giulio," exhorted Ordeloffi, casting a piercing glance down into the dark street near to the wall. "I trust that we shall not have long to wait."

"And what wait we for?" questioned the lieutenant.

"Giulio, you are devoted to my fortunes, I think," the captain said, abruptly.

"To the death!" responded the young lieutenant.

exchange for which she makes me lord of this good town."

"Da Ceri is rash to trifle with such a tigress."

"Yes, the woman who did not hesitate to punish the unfaithful husband, despite his powerful kindred, would not be apt to pause when only the life of a simple soldier was in question."

"And you, Ordeloffi, do you not fear to wed this demon of a woman?"

"Bah!" cried the leader of the Black Bands, caressing his bearded chin, "even a tigress can be tamed. For the sake of the town I take the woman, and, if we quarrel, no bite or sup will I taste that she has had the handling of. But hush! yonder he comes."

Through an open door the light streamed out into the night. A tall, dark figure passed into the air—and the shrill ring of steel as the long rapier touched the booted heel told that the stranger was armed.

Ordeloffi and his lieutenant followed the tall, dark figure closely.

Halting at last before a little inn in a by street, the young soldier—for it was Lorenzo de Ceri, the favorite of his august mistress, that the two followed so closely—cast a hasty glance around him, then entered the inn.

"He's trapped at last!" Ordeloffi exclaimed, in triumph. "Quick to the citadel and fetch me a squad of men."

"One moment, Ordeloffi!" quoth Giulio; "who is the woman that he comes to meet?"

"I know not; some slender damsel robed in black; a high-born dame, I'll wager. But, haste away!"

Fast the lieutenant ran, while the leader of the Black Bands couched in ambush and laughed in glee when he thought how soon he would be the lord of Faenza.

A short half-hour and the lieutenant with a dozen trusty blades came, and glided like so many dark shadows up the street.

Scarcely had they securely ensconced themselves in ambush, when the young soldier came from the inn, wrapping his cloak around him and gayly humming the light air of a love sonnet. As he passed down the street, never noticing the men in ambush, Ordeloffi whispered, hurriedly, to Giulio:

"Quick after him! arrest and bring him to

thy love," the soldier gasped, as he sunk, dying, to the floor.

Ordeloffi fled in horror; his hopes were marred forever.

In a cloister's gloom the Lady of Faenza sought forgetfulness and pardon for her sinful acts.

Rod and Rifle.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IN THE WILDERNESS."

IX.—THE WHIRLWIND'S TRACK.

SEVERAL days passed, each one adding strength and vigor to our enervated frames. It was wholly unnecessary to add to my appetite, yet it seemed as if I acquired gastronomic power on each succeeding day. The old guide used to look at me in wonder as I stowed away fish after fish, or polished numerous ribs of venison.

"He's a successful eater," said the old man. "Mighty Caesar! what a pile of grub he kin stow away when he sets his mind to it!"

"You chin a good deal about my eating," I replied, indignantly. "Look at Dan Harvey, will ye? He's swallowed five trout now, and commenced on another."

"A workman is known by his chips," was Dan's reply, as he pointed to a collection of ribs cleanly polished, and vertebrae picked closely, lying about the log on which I sat. "Never mind, Scrib; may good digestion wait on appetite. You want some flesh on your bones."

But seriously, the appetite of men in the woods is something wonderful.

After breakfast we shouldered our rods and rifles and walked across a half-mile "carry" to the next lake. The path led through a vast old woods, the patriarchal trunks bringing to the mind Bryant's grand "Forest Hymn," as they stood—

"Mossy and tall and dark;
Fit shrine for humble worshiper
To hold communion with his Maker."

It was a strange morning, the air heavy, the silence almost oppressive. Some unknown danger seemed to hang over us, though what it was we did not know. Old Ben glanced uneasily about him and quickened his pace.

"What is it, Ben?" asked Harry, who walked next to him. "There's something wrong here, is there not?"

"I dunno," replied the guide. "I wish we was out of the woods, that's all."

"What are you afraid of, Ben?"

"Nuthin', ez I knows on, but this kind of mornin' don't suit me."

The air, which had been a moment before oppressively warm, now became suddenly cold. A light wind, coming in fitful gusts, began to stir the forest leaves, and Old Ben knew his danger, yet he would not tell us what it was.

"Legs kin do it, boys," he cried. "Foller me and ef you never run afore, run now."

He took the lead, running at a speed which taxed our utmost powers to emulate. Dan alone of all the party kept close to his heels, and could have passed him easily, only he did not know which way to run. The wind was heavier now, a cold, chilling blast piercing to the very marrow. A shudder seemed to pass through the bending boughs, and a long, tremulous murmur was heard—a sound like the wail of an imprisoned spirit struggling to get free. I never like to run, but there are times when I can conquer prejudice, and this was one of the occasions. Perspiring at every pore, I followed Harry as fast as I could put foot to the ground, looking over my shoulder as I ran.

The murmur increased to a roar, as if the imprisoned demons had forced their way to liberty and were determined to claim us for their prey.

"Keep it up!" cried Old Ben. "A few hundred yards more an' we are safe."

As he spoke we began to ascend a rising ground, and the trees were more scattered and decreased in size. Out of breath, panting from that short but hard race, we toiled up the steep and stood triumphant upon the bare crest of a hill far above the tree-tops, and here we turned to note the danger from which we had fled.

"Look thar!" said Ben, pointing. "Now tell me we didn't do right to put in our durnedest?"

We looked back, and a strange, awful sight greeted our view. Five hundred yards away a huge spiral cloud, near a mile in diameter, was whirling down toward us over the path we had so lately pursued. In the heart of this cloud, whirled about like feathers, we saw the branches wrenched from the giant trees dancing like motes in the sun, and every moment some new change in the flying ruin was seen.

If you have never beheld the work of a whirlwind in a forest, you have missed one of the grandest sights in nature. Nothing can stand before its terrible power. Great trees were torn up by the roots, or literally twisted off at the stem, falling several yards from the trunk. The successive fall of these gigantic trees was like the crash of artillery in some great battle.

In the center of the whirling mass, and for a distance of half a mile, the ruin was fearful. That short but hard race, we toiled up the steep and stood triumphant upon the bare crest of a hill far above the tree-tops, and here we turned to note the danger from which we had fled.

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